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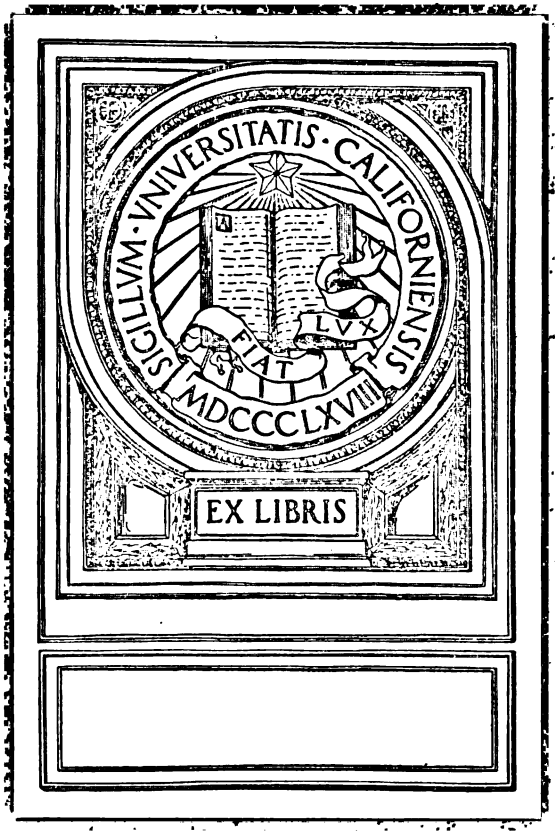
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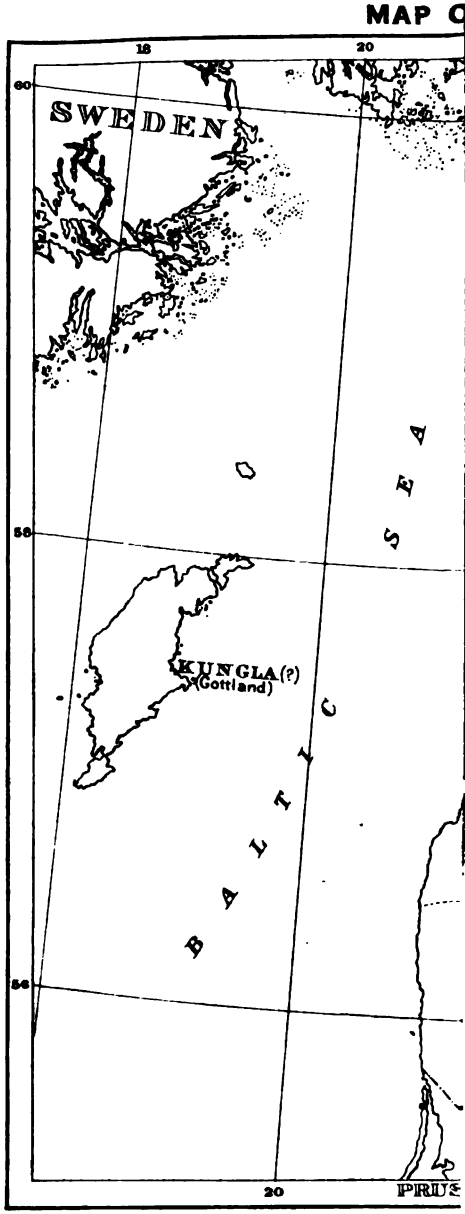
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THE HERO OF ESTHONIA

AND OTHER STUDIES IN THE ROMANTIC LITERATURE OF THAT COUNTRY

COMPILED

FROM ESTHONIAN AND GERMAN SOURCES BY

W. F. KIRBY, F.L.S., F.E.S., ETC.

CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE FINNISH LITERARY SOCIETY

WITH A MAP OF ESTHONIA

IN TWO VOLUMES

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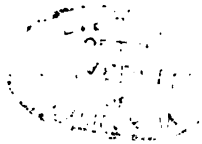

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PREFACE

WHEN I took up the study of the *Kalevala* and Finnish literature, with the intention of publishing a critical English edition of the poem, on which I am still engaged, the accumulation of the necessary materials led me to examine the literature of the neighbouring countries likewise. I had expected to find the *Kalevipoeg* an Esthonian variant of the *Kalevala;* but I found it so dissimilar, and at the same time so interesting, when divested of the tedious and irrelevant matter that has been added to the main story, that I finally decided to publish a full account of it in prose, especially as nothing of the kind has yet been attempted in English, beyond a few casual magazine articles.

The Esthonian folk-tales are likewise of much interest, and in many cases of an extremely original character; and these also have never appeared in an English dress. I have, therefore, selected a

sufficiently representative series, and have added a few ballads and short poems. This last section of the work, however, amounts to little more than an appendix to the *Kalevipoeg*, though it is placed at the end of the book. Esthonian ballad literature is of enormous extent, and only partially investigated and published at present, even in the original; and it would therefore be premature to try to treat of it in detail here, nor had I time or space to attempt it. I had, however, intended to have included a number of poems from Neus' *Ehstnische Volkslieder* in the present volumes, but found that it was unnecessary, as Latham has already given an English version of most of the best in his "Nationalities of Europe."

The Introduction and Notes will, it is hoped, be sufficiently full to afford all necessary information for the intelligent comprehension of the book, without overloading it; and it has been decided to add a sketch-map of this little known country, including some of the places specially referred to. But Esthonian folk-literature, even without the ballads, is a most extensive study, and I do not pretend to do more than offer a few specimens culled from some of the most easily accessible sources. My professional work does not allow me time to attempt

more at present; and it is from the same cause that my work on the *Kalevala* has been delayed so long.

In outlying parts of Europe like Finland and Esthonia, which were not Christianised till long after the southern and western countries, primitive literature has survived to a much greater extent than elsewhere; and the publication of the *Kalevala* and the *Kalevipoeg* during the present century furnishes a striking example before our very eyes of the manner in which the Iliad and the Odyssey grew up among the Greeks, before these poems were edited in the form in which they have come down to us, by order of Pisistratus.

The principal books used in the preparation of this work are mentioned in the short Bibliography. The names of others quoted or referred to will be found in the Index, which has also been drawn up in such a manner as to form a general glossary.

W. F. KIRBY.

CHISWICK, *September* 1894.

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INTRODUCTION

ESTHONIA

ESTHONIA, or Estonia, as some prefer to write it, is the most northerly of the three so-called German or Baltic provinces of Russia—Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland. It is bounded on the north by the Gulf of Finland, which lies between that country and Esthonia; on the east by the Government of St. Petersburg; on the south by Livonia, and on the west by the Baltic. Opposite its western coast lie numerous large islands, the most important of which are Dagö and Oesel; these islands nearly close the north-west corner of the Gulf of Riga.

The northern part of Livonia (including the island of Oesel, already mentioned) is partly inhabited by Esthonians, and is dealt with in popular literature as forming part of the country. The four provinces of Esthonia proper, which are constantly referred to,

are as follows, the German names being added in brackets. Two western, Arju or Harju (Harrien) on the north, and Lääne (Wiek) on the south; one central, Järva (Jerwen), and one eastern, Viru (Wierland). East of Livonia lies the great Lake Peipse or Peipus, eighty miles long and thirty-two miles broad at the broadest part, across which the son of Kalev is said to have waded to fetch timber from Pihgast or Pleskau, which name is used to include the Russian province of Pskov, bordering the lake on the south and south-east. At two-thirds of its length the lake is divided nearly in two, and the southern portion is sometimes called Lake Pskov. It may have been across the narrow part between the two ends of the lake that the hero is supposed to have waded, when, even during a great storm, the water reached only to his girdle.

The coast of Esthonia is rocky, but the interior of the country is very marshy, though there are no navigable rivers or lakes of much importance except Lake Peipus, which we have already mentioned. Small lakes, however, are very numerous, the largest being Lake Virts.

Esthonia was one of the countries conquered during the Middle Ages by the crusading German

Knights of the Sword, and has been described as a country with a Finnish population and a German aristocracy under Russian rule. Occasionally we meet with reminiscences of oppression by the German nobility in the songs and tales; as, for instance, in the story of the Royal Herd-boy; while everything beautiful or above the ordinary life of the peasants is characterised as Saxon.

The bulk of the population speak a language very closely allied to Finnish, and they possess a large store of oral literature, much of which has been collected, and in part published, during the present century. It has, however, attracted very little attention out of Esthonia, except in Finland, and to some extent in Germany, and very few articles on the subject have appeared in England or France. It is believed that this is the first work published in England giving any detailed account of the popular literature of Esthonia, and it does not pretend to be exhaustive, nor to extend much beyond the publication of Kreutzwald, Neus, and Jannsen.

The Finnish-Ugrian race, though not Aryan, is widely distributed throughout Europe and Asiatic Russia, and the principal peoples belonging to it

in the North are the Finns, the Esthonians, and the Lapps, who speak very similar languages, and whose tales and legends possess much similarity, while in the south the Magyars are more distantly related to them. The Lapp hero-tales, however, have more of a historical basis, while the popular tales are much shorter and less artistic. It is, however, curious that Swan-maiden stories are peculiarly common among the Lapps. Several other lesser known peoples belong to the same race, whom we need not further notice.

Esthonian abounds in dialects, but is so close to Finnish that it bears almost the same relation to it as Lowland Scotch to English, or perhaps as Danish to Swedish. But there is a strong admixture of German words in Esthonian, and their tales, when exhibiting traces of foreign influence, have apparently derived it from Germany. In Finnish tales, on the contrary, Russian influence is often very apparent.

The orthography is a little unsettled, words like Ukko or Kalev being often written with a single or double consonant, as Uko or Kallev; while words like Käpä are often written with double vowels, as Kääpä.

The pronunciation of most of the letters resembles that of English, or, in the case of the vowels, German, and calls for no special remark.

j, as in nearly all languages except English and French, corresponds to our *y*.

v is printed either *v* or *w* in Finnish and Esthonian, but corresponds to our *v*, and is thus used by the best Finnish authorities. Of course the Germans properly write it *w*, their *w* corresponding to our *v*.

For the modified vowels we have no exact equivalent in English; *ä* and *ü* are pronounced nearly as in German; but the *õ* may roughly be said to resemble our *ee* in sound. *y* has somewhat of a *u* sound, as in the Scandinavian languages; and, as in these too, the modified vowels are placed at the end of the alphabet, but in the following order: *ü*, *ä*, *õ*. Musical as is Finnish itself, Esthonian is still softer, as may be seen in the dropping of final consonants, as Vanemuine for Väinämöinen; and in such words as *kannel* (harp) for *kantele*. As in most parts of Northern Europe, the Gothic character is still much used in Finland and Esthonia, especially in literary works.

As a specimen of the language we may quote the original of the lines on p. 14:—

Ristitantsi tantsitie,
Viru tantsi veeritie,
Arju tantsi hakkatie,
Lääne tantsi lõhutie,
Sõre liiva sõtkutie,
Murupinda piinatie.
Tähte peig ja Salme neidu,
Pidasivad pulma ilu !

We may add the text of the lines on p. 49:—

Kalevide poeg ei väsi ;
Piht on meehel pihlakane,
Õlanukud õunapuusta,
Käevarred vahterased,
Küünarnukud künnapuusta,
Sõrmelülid sõsterased,
Sõrmeküüned kuuslapuused,
Raudarammu kõiges kehas.

THE KALEVIPOEG

In the year 1838 some Esthonian scholars founded a society called "*Die gelehrte Ehstnische Gesellschaft*," and set themselves to collect the popular literature of their country. Doubtless encouraged by the recent publication of the *Kalevala* in Finland, Dr. Fählmann undertook specially to collect any fragments of verse or prose relative to the mythical

hero of Esthonia, the son of Kalev, intending to weave them into a connected whole. He did not live to complete the work; but after his death Dr. Kreutzwald carried out his design, and the book was published, accompanied by a German translation by Reinthal and Bertram, from 1857 to 1861.

The materials were defective, and were augmented and pieced together, not always very successfully or artistically,[1] by Dr. Kreutzwald, and the story is interrupted by long lyrical passages, especially at the beginning of some of the cantos, which are tedious and out of place in a narrative poem. Consequently, a complete translation would hardly be sufficiently attractive; but there is so much that is curious and beautiful in the poem, that I think that a tolerably full prose abstract may perhaps be found both useful and interesting, as opening up an almost new subject to English readers.

Besides Reinthal's translation, there are two condensed abstracts of the poem in German, one by C. C. Israel, in prose, published in 1873, and the other by Julius Grosse, in hexameters, published in 1875.

[1] This is specially noticeable in the manner in which the story of the Great Oak Tree is scattered in disjointed fragments through three cantos; and in the unsuccessful result of the Kalevide's voyage, when he reaches his goal after his return by a land journey.

But while the *Kalevala* has been translated into six or seven languages, and into several of them two or three times, extremely little has been published on the *Kalevipoeg* outside of Esthonia and Finland.

The metre is the eight-syllable trochaic, which is the commonest metre used by the Esthonians and Finns. In the *Kalevipoeg* the verse usually flows continuously, while in the *Kalevala* it is arranged in distichs, almost every second line being a repetition of the first in other words; nor is the *Kalevipoeg* quite so full of alliteration as the *Kalevala*.

Longfellow adapted this metre in his *Hiawatha* from Schiefner's German translation of the *Kalevala*, and as it was then a novelty in English, it was set down at the time as Longfellow's own invention, and was much ridiculed. A similar metre, however, was used before the appearance of *Hiawatha* in some parts of Kenealy's *Goethe*, which was published in 1850, and subsequently condensed and completed under the title of "A New Pantomime." I quote a passage from this wonderful but eccentric poem (*Goethe*, p. 301) to show the manner in which Kenealy has used it in the lighter parts of his work; but in some of the darker passages it shows itself as a versatile metre of great power in English :—

"We have come, enchanting ladyes,
To sojourn awhile, and revel
In these bowers, far outshining
The six heavens of Mohammed,
Or the sunbright spheres of Vishnu,
Or the Gardens of Adonis,
Or the viewless bowers of Irim,
Or the fine Mosaic mythus,
Or the fair Elysian flower-land,
Or the clashing halls of Odin,
Or the cyclop-orbs of Brahma,
Or the marble realms of Siva,
Or the grandly proud Walhalla."

I do not find this metre used in either of the two cognate poems, *Faust* and *Festus*.

To return to the *Kalevipoeg*, the poem consists of twenty cantos and about 19,000 verses. Some of the legends are found also in the *Kalevala*, and the giant-hero whose life and adventures form its subject is evidently the same as the Kullervo of the *Kalevala*, as will be seen in our notes on various passages in the poem.

Of the other heroes of the *Kalevala*, besides an occasional reference to Vanemuine and Ilmarine (Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen), we find no trace; but three heroes, apparently cousins of the Kalevipoeg, appear suddenly in the poem. These are usually

called by their patronymics, Alevide, Sulevide, and Olevide, but sometimes simply Alev, Sulev, and Olev.

FOLK-TALES IN PROSE

The most important collection of Esthonian prose tales was edited by Kreutzwald, and was published by the Finnish Literary Society at Helsingfors in 1866, under the title of *Eestirahwa Ennemuistesed jutud*, and has since been reprinted at Dorpat. In 1869 the same Society published a useful little Esthonian-Finnish glossary to the volume. A good German translation of many of these tales, by F. Löwe, appeared at Halle in 1869, under the title of *Ehstnische Märchen*, with notes by various contributors; and M. Dido, who has lately translated two or three of the tales into French, and given more or less detailed notices of the others, mentions that they have also been translated into Russian. Other collections of Esthonian tales have since been published; and Harry Jannsen has published a selection in German under the title of *Märchen und Sagen des estnischen Volkes* (Dorpat, 1881; Riga, 1888). Some of his tales are taken from Kreutz

wald, but I have not seen the Esthonian originals of the others. Many of the longer and more interesting tales in those collections I have given in full; others are more or less abridged, or simply noticed, and some few unimportant tales towards the end of Kreutzwald's collection have been passed over altogether.

One of Kreutzwald's longer tales, which I thought too unlike the others to be noticed in the body of the work, is, "How Seven Tailors went to war in Turkey." Their names were, "First-man, One-strong, Two-strong, Three-strong, Four-strong, Five-strong, and Last-man;" and the story gives a comic account of their poltrooneries.

Other tales relate to a plot against a chaste wife; a girl who clears herself from scandal by lifting and hurling a huge stone; &c.

BALLADS AND OTHER SHORT POEMS

The plan of the present work did not allow of many short poetical pieces being included; nevertheless, two of the best of the numerous songs and ballads interspersed through the *Kalevipoeg* have been given, and two other specimens from

Neus' *Ehstnische Volkslieder* (Revel, 1850–1852) and Kreutzwald and Neus' *Mythische und Magische Lieder der Ehsten* (St. Petersburg, 1854). More poetical specimens were thought unnecessary, because many of the principal ballads in the former work will be found translated in Latham's "Nationalities of Europe," 1863.

PASTOR HURT'S COLLECTIONS

In recent years enormous collections of Esthonian folk-lore have been formed by Pastor Jacob Hurt and his coadjutors.

"Three volumes of these collections were edited by Hurt in 1875, 1876, and 1886, under the title of *Vana Kannel*, the 'Old Harp;' and other collections were published by several of his colleagues. In 1888 Hurt made a renewed appeal to the Esthonians to collect their old songs, and fresh contributions came pouring in from all quarters.

"Special attention was called to Pastor Hurt's work at the Congress of Folk-lorists in Paris by Henry Carnoy.

"According to the latest intelligence which I have received from Dr. Krohn, Pastor Hurt has received

contributions from 633 different folk-tale collectors in the last three and a half years. Most of these contributors are simple peasants; some are schoolmasters, but only a few are students or highly educated persons.

"He now possesses, as the result of three and a half years' work of this nature, epics, lyrics, wedding-songs, &c., upwards of 20,000 items; tales, about 3000; proverbs, about 18,000; riddles, about 20,000. Besides these he has a large collection of magical formulæ, superstitions, &c.

"He has only been able to accomplish these extraordinary results by his having been able to awaken popular interest in the subject."[1]

I am glad to hear from my friend Dr. Kaarle Krohn, to whom I have been indebted for much useful information and assistance in my own studies, that part of the results of these great collections are likely to be published very shortly. Of course a great number of tales and songs are merely variants. Many relate to legends belonging rather to the *Kalevala* than to the *Kalevipoeg*.

In Dr. Krohn's important paper, *Die geogra-*

[1] Kirby in "Papers and Transactions of International Folk-lore Congress of 1891," p. 429.

phische Verbreitung Estnischer Lieder, published in 1892, he divides Esthonia and Northern Livonia into several districts, and marks the number of variants obtained in each. It may be interesting to summarise the latter, to show the extent to which the collection of variants has been carried on in Esthonia.

1. Legend of the creation of the earth and of the origin of the heavenly bodies, 62 variants.

2. Salme and her suitors, 160 variants; and 33 relative to the celestial suitors.

3. The Great Ox, 24 variants.

4. The Great Oak, 130 variants, and 61 relative to its fragments.

5. The Weeping Oak, 61 variants.

6. The origin of the harp and of boating, three variations, with 19, 39, and 17 variants respectively.

7. The bride of gold and silver, 52 variants.

8. Songs of the Seluks or Orthodox Esths, 91 variants.

MYTHOLOGY

We can, I think, trace Finnish and Esthonian religion through four well-marked stages.

1. Fetishism, as seen in the story of the Treasure-Bringer, and in the account given of the origin of various animals, &c.

2. Nature-worship.

3. Transitional stage, well marked in the *Kalevala*, where the heroes sometimes pray to the gods in conventional Christian phraseology, and at other times try to compel their assistance by invocations and spells. This stage is also seen in the strange travesty of the Nativity in the last Runo of the *Kalevala;* and indeed, one of the older writers says that the favourite deities of the Finns in his time were Väinämöinen and the Virgin Mary. But this stage is much less visible in the *Kalevipoeg*, which is, on the whole, a more archaic and more heathenish poem than the *Kalevala.*

4. Mediæval Christianity.

The gods belong to the stage of Nature-worship. The supreme god is Taara, to whom the oak is sacred. The most celebrated of his sacred oak-forests was in the neighbourhood of Dorpat. Thursday is his day; whence it is more often mentioned in popular tales than any other day in the week. He is also called Uko or Ukko (the Old God), by which name he is usually known in the

Kalevala; and also Vana Isa, or Old Father. The Christian God is called Jumal or Jumala, and is probably to be identified with Taara. Ukko or Tarra is the ancestor and protector of the heroes; he attended with Rõugutaja at the birth of the Kalevipoeg, watched over and protected him during his life, sometimes appeared to counsel him in visions, received him in his heavenly halls after death, and assigned to him his future employment.

Ukko's daughters are Lindu and Jutta, the queens of the birds; and Siuru, who is described as a blue bird herself. Possibly these may be all the same; and the first at least may be identical with Kalev's bride, Linda, who was born from an egg, and whose name is evidently derived from *lind* or *lindu*, a bird.

Äike, Kõu, Paristaja, Pikne, Piker, or Pikker, is the god of thunder, and some of his names connect him with the Lithuanian Perkunas. He thunders across the iron bridges of the skies in his chariot, and hurls his thunderbolts at the demons, like Thor. He also possesses a musical instrument, of which the demons stand in great terror. He has a ne'er-do-weel son, who has dealings with the Devil, and a mischievous little daughter, called the Air-Maiden.

Ahti, the god of the waters, is mentioned occasionally, but much less frequently than Ahto in the *Kalevala*. He must not be confounded with Ahti, one of the names of the hero Lemminkainen in the latter poem.

Rōugutaja is the god of the winds and waves, and attends specially on births. In one story, however, he appears rather in the character of a morose wood-demon with very undesirable family connections than as a god. This is very probably due to missionary efforts to malign his character and discredit his worship. However, there is a class of magicians who are called Wind-sorcerers, and witches often invoke the aid of the Mother of the Wind.

An old man, with one eye and a long grey beard, often appears to travellers in the forests. He is probably the Finnish Tapio, but is not named.

The sun, moon, and stars are represented as male deities.

Goddesses preside over the woods, fields, waters, &c. Thus we have the Meadow-Queen (literally, Grass-mother), who presides over the home-field, and is therefore one of the protecting deities of the household. She is also the queen of the woods and fields. The Wind-mother and Water-mother are

similar deities, and the wood-nymphs and water-nymphs are their daughters.

Vanemuine, the Väinämöinen of the Finns, is the god of song and music, rather than the patriarch and culture-hero of the *Kalevala*. All voices and sounds in nature are only echoes of his music. He has a foster-daughter, Jutta, of whom we have given an account elsewhere.

Ilmarine (Finnish, Ilmarinen) is a great smith, whose workshop is under a mountain at the centre of the earth.

The Devil has many names, being called Kurat, the Evil One; Tühi or Tühja, the Empty One, or rather, perhaps, the Contemptible One; but most often Vana Pois, the Old Boy; God being frequently called Vana Isa, the Old Father. He dwells in the underground kingdom, and has three daughters, or foster-daughters; a hat of invisibility, composed of nail-parings; a bridge-building wand, and a sword. He has also much gold and silver plate, and ducks and geese with gold and silver plumage. These treasures are often carried off by enterprising heroes. The maidens whom the Kalevipoeg found in the palace of Sarvik do not appear to have been at all unkindly treated, though they had to work

hard, and much regretted that they had no human company.

Another Devil, more prominent in the *Kalevipoeg*, is Vana Sarvik, or Old Hornie, who is represented as Tühi's brother-in-law.

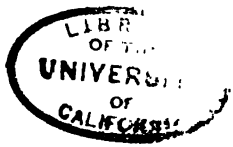
The Devil's underground kingdom is called Põrgu, or Hell. His mother usually appears in the form of a bitch, and his grandmother under that of a white mare. The minor Esthonian devils are usually stupid rather than malevolent. They are sometimes ogres or soul-merchants, but are at times quite ready to do a kindness, or to return one to those who aid them. Their great enemies are the Thunder-God and the wolf. The principal outwitter of the devil is generally called Crafty Hans; and several volumes of their adventures have been published in Esthonian. The Devil is often represented as fond of beer.

Besides the above-named gods and demons, we have spirits of the whirlwind and the Northern Lights; gnomes; and a host of inferior demons, as well as various grades of sorcerers, especially Wind-sorcerers, Word-sorcerers, or soothsayers, and Death-sorcerers, or necromancers. The Tont, or House-Spirit, goes by various names; among others Kratt or Puuk. Kratt is perhaps a word

of Scandinavian or German origin; Puuk must be the same as our Puck, or the Irish Pouka. He was probably originally a beneficent house-spirit, and in later times assumed the demoniacal character in which he appears in the story of the Treasure-Bringer. In the story of "Martin and his Dead Master," we have a spectre much resembling a vampyre in character.

The gigantic race of the heroes is represented as descended from Taara. As in the case of so many other hero-races—as, for example, the knights of Arthur, Finn, Charlemagne, Vladimir, Palmerin, &c.—they are at length practically destroyed in a series of terrible battles, while the Kalevipoeg, like Arthur, Olger, Barbarossa, and Tell, remains in enchanted bondage till the day shall come for him to restore the ancient glories of his country.[1]

[1] Further information on most of the subjects discussed in the Introduction will be found in the Notes and Index.



PART I

THE HERO OF ESTHONIA

THE *Kalevipoeg*, which may be called the national epic of Esthonia, contains the adventures of a mythical hero of gigantic size, who ruled over the country in its days of independence and prosperity. He is always called by his patronymic, Kalevipoeg, or Kalevide, the son of Kalev; and, notwithstanding the great differences between them, he is evidently the Kullervo of the Finnish *Kalevala*.

The *Kalevipoeg* consists of twenty cantos and about 19,000 lines; and a fairly complete prose outline of the story is here given, all the tedious lyrical interludes which break its continuity, especially at the beginning of several of the cantos, being entirely omitted. For further

general information respecting the poem itself we will refer to the Introduction, and will now proceed to give a short abstract of the principal contents of the cantos, before proceeding to a more detailed analysis.

ARGUMENT OF THE "KALEVIPOEG"

Canto I.—Three brothers travel in various directions, one of whom, Kalev,[1] is carried by an eagle to Esthonia, where he becomes king. A widow finds a hen, a grouse's egg, and a young crow. From the two first spring the fair maidens, Salme and Linda, and from the last a slave-girl. Salme chooses the Youth of the Stars, and Linda the young giant-king Kalev, as their respective husbands, with whom they depart.

Canto II.—Death and burial of Kalev; birth of his posthumous son, the Kalevipoeg.

Canto III.—The Kalevipoeg and his brothers go hunting in the forest. During their absence Linda is carried off by a Finnish sorcerer whose suit she has despised. She escapes from him through the interference of the gods, who afterwards change her into a rock. Return of the

[1] The names of the others are not mentioned, but later in the poem we meet with three heroes, the sons of Alev, Olev, and Sulev respectively, associated with the son of Kalev, and spoken of as his cousins. Alev and Sulev may have been the brothers of Kalev.

brothers; the Kalevide seeks help and counsel at his father's grave.

Canto IV.—The Kalevide throws himself into the sea to swim to Finland. In the evening he lands on an island where he meets a maiden whom he seduces. When she hears his name, she is horrified, and falls into the sea. He plunges after her, but being unable to save her, swims onwards on his journey. The parents rake the sea, and find an oak and a fir and other things, but not their daughter. Song of a maiden who was enticed into the sea by a man of copper.

Canto V.—The planting of the great oak-tree on the island. The Kalevide arrives in Finland and slays the sorcerer.

Canto VI.—The Kalevide visits a famous smith, from whom he buys a huge sword, which was bespoken by his father Kalev. A great drinking-bout is held in his honour, during which he slays the smith's eldest son in a fit of drunken fury, and the smith curses him. The felling of the great oak-tree on the island.

Canto VII.—The Kalevide finds the sorcerer's boat, and sails homeward. The three brothers relate their adventures, and the eldest proposes that they should now decide which of them shall settle in the country as his father's heir. The Kalevide again visits his father's grave.

Canto VIII.—The three sons of Kalev journey to the shores of a lake, and try their strength in hurling rocks across it. The youngest makes the best cast, and the other two leave the country. The Kalevide ploughs the land, and one day while he is sleeping his horse is devoured by wolves.

Canto IX.—The Kalevide slaughters the wolves. News of war. The visit of Taara. The Finnish Bridge.

Canto X.—In order to settle a dispute between two water-demons, the Kalevide's cousin, the Alevide, begins to drain a swamp. The water-demon begs the hero to desist, and the latter tricks the demon out of his treasures. Visit of the Kalevide's cup-bearer to the water-demon's palace, and his escape. The Kalevide overcomes the demon in hurling and wrestling. He decides to build fortified towns, and sets out to Lake Peipus to fetch timber. Meeting with the Air-maiden at a well.

Canto XI.—The Kalevide wades through Lake Peipus. A sorcerer steals his sword and sinks it in the brook Käpä, where the Kalevide leaves it, after enjoining it to cut off the legs of him who had brought it there; meaning the sorcerer. He encounters a man of ordinary stature in a forest, whom he puts in his wallet. The man relates his adventure with two giants and their mother.

Canto XII.—The Kalevide is attacked by three sons of the sorcerer, and beats them off with the boards, which are destroyed. Adventure with the hedgehog. The Kalevide finds to his grief that the man in his wallet has been killed by a chance blow during the fight. He falls asleep, and the sorcerer casts a spell upon him which throws him into a deep sleep for seven weeks. Vision of Ilmarine's workshop. The Kalevide wakes, and sets out on his return. Adventures of two poor boys.

Canto XIII.—On his return journey the Kalevide finds some demons cooking at the entrance to a cave. He enters the cavern, which leads him to the door of the palace of

Sarvik,[1] which he breaks open. In the antechamber, he finds three maidens.

Canto XIV.—Next day the maidens show the Kalevide over Sarvik's palace. Sarvik surprises them, and wrestles with the Kalevide in the enclosure, but is overcome and vanishes. The Kalevide and the sisters escape from the palace.

Canto XV.—The fugitives are pursued by the demons, but the youngest sister raises a flood between them. The leader, Tühi, questions the Kalevide, who answers him sarcastically, and the demons take to flight. The three sisters are married to the Kalevide's kinsmen.

Canto XVI.—The Kalevide projects a voyage to the end of the world. Building of the ship Lennuk. Voyage to Finland and Lapland. Meeting with Varrak, the Laplander. Voyage to the Island of Fire. The Giant's Daughter. The Northern Lights. The Dog-men. Homeward voyage.

Canto XVII.—The fortified cities. Great battle with invaders. Land journey of the Kalevide and his friends. Encounter with Sarvik disguised as a dwarf. The daughters of the Meadow-Queen.

Canto XVIII.—The gates of Põrgu.[2] The Kalevide enters the cavern, notwithstanding every obstacle fights his way across an iron bridge, and enters Sarvik's palace.

Canto XIX.—The Kalevide overcomes Sarvik in a wrestling match, and loads him with chains. He returns to the upper world, and finds the Alevide waiting for him

[1] The Prince of Hades, literally Hornie.
[2] Hades or Hell.

at the entrance to the cavern. Return of the Kalevide to Lindanisa.[1] Great feast and songs. News of a formidable invasion. Departure of Varrak for Lapland. Arrival of fugitives.

Canto XX.—The Kalevide buries his treasure. Terrible battles, in which his cousin the Sulevide is slain. Drowning of the Alevide. The Kalevide abdicates in favour of his surviving cousin, the Olevide, and retires to live in seclusion on the bank of a river. Being annoyed by occasional visitors, he wanders away towards Lake Peipus, and steps into the brook Käpä, when his sword cuts off his legs. His soul takes flight to the halls of Taara,[2] but is bidden by the gods to reanimate his body. He is mounted on a horse, and stationed at the gates of Pōrgu, to keep watch and ward on Sarvik and his hosts.

[1] Linda's Bosom, the Kalevide's capital, named in honour of his mother; now Revel.

[2] Ukko, the principal god of the Finns and Esthonians, is frequently called Taara in the *Kalevipoeg*. This name is not used in Finnish; but Tora is the name of God among the Chuvash of Kasan.

THE KALEVIPOEG

OR,

THE ADVENTURES OF THE SON OF KALEV, THE HERO OF ESTHONIA.

THE poem commences with an invocation to Vanemuine.[1] This is followed by a long lyrical exordium.

CANTO I

THE MARRIAGES OF SALME AND LINDA

In ancient days, the race of Taara dwelt here and there in the land, and took to themselves wives of the daughters of men.[2] In the far North,

[1] In the Finnish *Kalevala*, Väinämöinen is represented as a culture-hero, and as the father of his people; in Esthonia Vanemuine is usually a demi-god. He is always the inventor and patron of music and the harp. He plays no part in the *Kalevipoeg*, where his name is only mentioned once or twice.

[2] If this is a Scriptural allusion, it is almost the only one in the book. The *Kalevipoeg* is essentially a pre-Christian poem, and nowhere exhibits the curious mixture of pre-Christian and Christian

near the sacred oak forest of Taara, such a household existed, and from thence three sons went forth into the world to seek their fortunes. One son travelled to Russia, where he became a great merchant; another journeyed to Lapland, and became a warrior; while the third, the famous Kalev,[1] the father of heroes, was borne to Esthonia on the back of an eagle.[2] The eagle flew with him to the south across the Gulf of Finland, and then eastward across Lääne[3] and Viru,[4] until, by the wise ordering of Jumala,[5] the eagle finally descended

ideas that we meet with in many parts of the *Kalevala*, and notably in Runo 50.

[1] In the *Kalevala* (=the country of Kaleva), the hero himself does not appear in person, though we constantly read of his sons and daughters. Some critics, however, identify him with the dead giant, Antero Vipunen, in Runo 17 of the *Kalevala*.

[2] The eagle of the North plays a conspicuous part in Finnish and Esthonian literature. It is this bird for whose resting-place Väinämöinen spares the birch-tree, and which afterwards rescues him from the waves and carries him to Pohjola. In several cosmogonic ballads, too, it is the eggs of this bird and not of the blue duck which contribute to the formation of the world: for the Mundane Egg plays a part here as well as in other cosmogonies. The passage in the *Kalevipoeg*, to which this note refers, corresponds almost exactly to one in the *Kalevala* (xxx. 1–10), which ushers in the adventures of Kullervo.

[3] A province in Western Esthonia, called Wiek by the Germans.

[4] Esthonia proper; specially applied to the north-eastern province.

[5] God: this word is applied to the Christian God in Esthonia, Finland, and Lapland, as well as to the local divinities.

with him on the rocky shores of Viru, where he founded a kingdom.

In the province of Lääne a young widow lived quietly by herself. One Sunday she followed the footprints of her cattle, and what did she find on her way? On the path she found a hen; she found a grouse's egg in the footprints of the cattle, and she found a young crow near the village. She carried them all home with her to comfort her loneliness, and she made a nest for the hen and the egg in a basket lined with wool, but she threw the young crow into a corner behind the boxes.

The hen soon began to grow, and her head reached the lid of the basket while she sat on the egg. She grew taller for three months, and for several days of the fourth month.

The widow went into the storehouse to look at her foster-children, and what did she behold on raising the lid of the basket? The hen had grown into the fair maiden Salme;[1] the egg had given

[1] There are many tales and ballads about the miraculous birth and wooing of Salme and Linda. (Compare Neus, *Ekstnische Volkslieder*, p. 9; Latham's *Nationalities of Europe*, i. p. 142.) In the story of the "Milky Way," which commences Part II. of this volume, Linda is represented as the daughter of Uho, and the

birth to a second maiden, Linda, while the poor crow had become an orphan girl, a maid-of-all-work, to carry wood to the stove and to bend under the weight of water-pails from the well.

Salme was besieged by suitors. Five and six brought her offerings of corn-brandy, seven sent her offers of marriage, and eight sent trustworthy messengers to bring them news of her. The fame of her beauty spread far and wide, and at length not merely mortal lovers, but even the Moon, the Sun,[1] and the eldest son of the Pole Star sought her hand in marriage.

The Moon drove up in a grand chariot drawn by fifty horses, and attended by a train of sixty grooms. He was a pale slender youth, and found no favour in the eyes of Salme, who cried out from the storehouse:

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queen of the birds. We also read of a blue bird, Siuru, the daughter of Taara, in the ballads. The name Linda or Lindu is evidently derived from the word *Lind*, a bird.

[1] The Sun and Moon are both male deities in Finnish and Esthonian. In the *Kalevala* (Runo 11) the sun, moon, and a star seek the hand of Kylliki, the fair maid of Saari, for their sons, but she rejects them all as unceremoniously as Salme. In the *Kanteletar* (iii. 6), a maiden called Suometar (=Finland's daughter) plays a similar part. Suometar is born from a duck's egg, found by a young girl named Katrina.

"Him I will not have for husband,
And the night-illumer love not.
Far too varied are his duties,
And his work is much too heavy.
Sometimes he must shine in heaven
Ere the day, or late in evening;
Sometimes when the sun is rising;
Sometimes he must toil at morning,
Ere the day has fully broken;
Sometimes watches in the daytime,
Lingering in the sky till mid-day."

When the Moon heard her answer, he grew yet paler, and returned home sorrowful.

And now the Sun himself appeared, a young man with fiery eyes; and he drove up with similar state to the Moon. But Salme declared that she liked him even less than the Moon, for he was much too fickle. Sometimes, during the finest summer weather, he would send rain in the midst of the hay-harvest; or if the time had come for sowing oats, he would parch the land with drought; or if the time for sowing is past, he dries up the barley in the ground, beats down the flax, and presses down the peas in the furrows; he won't let the buck-wheat grow, or the lentils in their pods; and when the rye is white for harvest, he either glows fiercely and drives away the clouds, or sends a pouring rain.

The Sun was deeply offended; his eyes glowed with anger, and he departed in a rage.

At last the Youth of the Stars made his appearance, driving with a similar cortège to those who had preceded him.

As soon as Salme heard of his arrival, she cried out that his horse was to be led into the stable and tended with the utmost care. The horse must have the best provender, and must be given fine linen to rest on and be covered with silken cloths; his head was to rest on satin, and his hoofs on soft hay. After this she declared to his master:

"Him I will accept as lover,
Give the Star my hand in marriage,
And will prove his faithful consort.
Gently shine his eyes of starlight,
And his temper alters nothing.
Never can he thwart the sowing,
Never will destroy the harvest."

Having thus accepted her suitor and provided for the comfort of his horse, Salme ordered the bridegroom to be ushered into the hall, where the broad table was washed clean and covered with a new tablecloth. The Star was to be seated with his back to the wall and his feet comfortably propped up on the bench, while he was to

be feasted on the best meat and fish, and offered wedding-cake and honey, besides beer and sweet mead. The widow invited the Star to take his place at the table, and pressed him to eat and drink, but he was greatly excited, and his weapons, ornaments, and heavy spurs jingled and clanked as he stamped on the floor, and declared that he would eat nothing till Salme herself appeared before him. But Salme asked him to wait awhile while she adorned herself, and asked her sister Linda to fetch her woollen dress and her silken shift with gold-embroidered sleeves, her stockings with the pretty garters, and the brightly coloured and gold-worked kerchiefs of silk and linen.

Meantime, the widow again invited the Star to eat and drink, or, if he were tired, to sleep; but he declared, as before, that he would neither eat nor drink till he had seen Salme, and that the stars never closed their eyes in sleep.

At last Salme herself appeared in the hall, but the Meadow-Queen[1] and the wood nymphs had so adorned her that her foster-mother did not know

[1] *Muru eit*, the meadow-queen (literally grass-mother), is regarded as one of the tutelary divinities of the house. Esthonian houses generally stand in a *grass field*, entered by a gate. Within the enclosure are the storehouses, cattle-pens, and other outbuildings.

her again, and asked in astonishment, "Is it the moon,[1] or the sun, or one of the young daughters of the sunset?"

Guests gathered to the wedding from far and near, and even the oaks and alders came, roots, branches, and all.

After this they danced the cross-dance,[2]
Waltzed the waltzes of Esthonia,
And they danced the Arju[3] dances,
And the dances of the West Land;
And they danced upon the gravel,
And they trampled all the greensward.
Starry youth and maiden Salme,
Thus their nuptials held in rapture.

In the midst of these joyous festivities, the Moon and then the Sun returned in greater state than before to seek the hand of Linda, who was resting on a couch in the bathroom; but she also refused

[1] This is somewhat inconsistent with the rather undignified appearance of the Sun and Moon in person a little while before.

[2] The cross-dance is still danced in out-of-the-way parts of the country; it is a kind of quadrille. Four couples station themselves in such a manner as to form a cross. The opposite pairs advance and retire several times, and then they dance round, when the second pairs dance in the same manner, and another dance round follows, till they have danced enough. The dance is accompanied with a song, in which the dancers, and sometimes the bystanders, join.

[3] Arju or Harju (German, Harrieu) one of the provinces of Esthonia.

them both, almost in the same terms as her sister had done; and they retired sorrowfully.

A third suitor, the Lord of the Waters, now appeared; but Linda replied that the roaring of the waves was terrible, and the depth of the sea was awful; that the brooks only gave a scanty supply of water, and the river-floods were devastating. He was followed by the Wind, who rode the Horse of the Tempest, and, like all the other suitors, was attended by a cavalcade of fifty horses and sixty grooms; and he too asked the hand of Linda. But she replied that a delicate girl could never take pleasure in the howling of the wind and the raging of the tempest. The Wind whistled out of the house, but his trouble did not weigh on his heart very long.

Another suitor for the hand of Linda now appeared in the person of the Prince of Kungla.[1] All the guests, and Linda's own sisters, approved of this suitor. But Linda declared that she could not

[1] Kungla is described as a country of untold wealth and the land of adventures—a kind of fairyland. It appears, however, to have been a real country, separated from Esthonia by sea, of which fabulous tales were told. Some writers identify it with the Government of Perm; but this is improbable, as it is generally described as an island. Others think that the island of Gottland is meant.

think of accepting him; for the king, his father, had wicked daughters, who would treat a stranger unkindly.

A sixth suitor now appeared in the person of the young and handsome giant Kalev. All the wedding-guests grumbled, and even the widow was opposed to the match; but he pleased Linda, and she accepted him at once. The widow then invited him to enter and partake of the good cheer; but he trembled with eagerness, so that his sword in its sheath, and his chains and spurs, and even the money in his purse, jingled as he answered that he would neither eat nor drink till Linda appeared before him. Linda begged for a little delay to adorn herself, but Kalev still refused to eat or drink, and then she called her slave-sister to help her, while the widow continued her ineffectual invitations to Kalev to feast and enjoy himself.

At last Linda appeared in the hall, where she excited as much admiration as her sister, and her wedding was celebrated with still greater festivities than Salme's, the guests dancing the local dances of every province of Esthonia.

But now the Youth of the Stars could delay no longer, and Salme took an affecting farewell

of her foster-mother and all her kith and kin, declaring that she would now be hidden behind the clouds, or wandering through the heavens transformed into a star. Then she mounted her sledge, and again bade her foster-mother a last and eternal farewell. Linda and her slave-sister called after her to ask whither she was going; but there came no answer save the sighing of the wind, and tears of joy and regret in the rain and the dew; nor did they ever receive tidings of Salme more.

After Salme's departure, the wedding-festival of Linda was kept up for some time, and when Kalev finally drove off with her in her sledge, she bade farewell to her foster-mother; but Kalev reminded her that she had forgotten the moon before the house, who was her father; the sun before the storehouse, who was her old uncle; and the birch-tree before the window, who was her brother, besides her cousins in the wood. They gazed after her sorrowfully; but she was happy with Kalev, and heeded them not. Kalev and Linda drove on in their sledge day and night across the snow-fields and through the pine-forests till they reached their home.

CANTO II

THE DEATH OF KALEV

KALEV and Linda lived very happily together, and were blessed with a numerous offspring;[1] but the country was small, and as soon as the children were grown up they wandered forth into the world to seek their fortunes, more especially as Kalev had determined that one son only should be the heir to his possessions. At length Kalev began to grow old, and felt that his end was approaching. Two of his younger sons, who were still little boys, remained at home; but the youngest of all, the famous Sohni, more often known by his patronymic, the Son of Kalev, was still unborn. Kalev foretold the glory and greatness of this last son to Linda, indicating him as his heir,[2] and shortly afterwards fell dangerously sick.

[1] According to various traditions, Kalev and Linda are said to have had seven or twelve sons.

[2] This is what Jacobs calls "junior right;" the patriarchal

Then Linda took her brooch, and spun it round on a thread, while she sent forth the Alder-Beetle[1] to bid the Wind-Magician and Soothsayer hasten to the bedside of her husband. Seven days the brooch spun round, and seven days the beetle flew to the north, across three kingdoms and more, till he encountered the Moon, and besought his aid. But the Moon only gazed on him sorrowfully without speaking, and went on his way.

Again Linda spun the brooch for seven days, and sent forth the beetle, who flew farther this time, through many thick forests, and as far as the Gold Mountain, till he encountered the Evening Star; but he also refused him an answer.

Next time the beetle took a different route, over wide heaths and thick fir-woods, till he reached the Gold Mountain, and met the rising Sun. He also

custom of the elder children going forth into the world to seek their fortunes, and the youngest remaining at home to look after his parents and inherit their possessions. Hence the rivalry between Esau and Jacob.

[1] Has this anything to do with boys spinning cockchafers on a thread? The beetle alluded to in the text is said to be the lady-bird, but the ladybird has no particular connection with the alder. When a brooch is thus spun on a thread, a question is asked, and if the motion stops, the answer is unfavourable, but favourable if it continues. The flight of the beetle is fortunate towards the south, but unfortunate towards the north.

returned no answer; but on a fourth journey the beetle encountered the Wind-Magician, the old Soothsayer from Finland,[1] and the great Necromancer himself. He besought their aid, but they replied with one voice that what the drought had parched up, the moonlight blanched, and the stars withered, could never bloom again. And before the beetle returned from his fruitless journey the mighty Kalev had expired.

Linda sat weeping by his bedside without food or sleep for seven days and nights, and then began to prepare his corpse for burial. First she bathed it with her tears, then with salt water from the sea, rain water from the clouds, and lastly water from the spring. Then she smoothed his hair with her fingers, and brushed it with a silver brush, and combed it with the golden comb which the water-nymphs had used to comb their hair. She drew on him a silken shirt, a satin shroud, and a robe over it, confined by a silver girdle. She her-

[1] It is curious that the Esthonians always regarded the Finns, and the Finns the Lapps, as great sorcerers; each nation attributing special skill in magic to those living north of themselves. But there is a Finnish ballad (*Kanteletar*, iii. 2) in which we read of the sun and moon being stolen by German and Esthonian sorcerers.

self dug his grave thirty ells below the sod, and grass and flowers soon sprang from it.

From the grave the grasses sprouted,
And the herbage from the hillock;
From the dead man dewy grasses,
From his cheeks grew ruddy flowers,
From his eyes there sprang the harebells,
Golden flowerets from his eyelids.[1]

Linda mourned for Kalev for one month after another till three months had passed, and the fourth was far advanced. She heaped a cairn of stones over his tomb, which formed the hill on which the Cathedral of Revel now stands. One day she was carrying a great stone to the cairn, but found herself too weak, and let it fall. She sat down on it, and lamented her sad fate, and her tears formed the lake called "Ulemiste järv," the Upper Lake, beside which the huge stone block may still be seen.[2]

After this, Linda felt her time approaching, and she retired to the bathroom,[3] and called upon the

[1] This reminds us of Ariel's well-known song—

"Full fathom five thy father lies,
Of his bones are coral made," &c.

[2] The origin of stone blocks is usually ascribed to non-human beings in many countries, but most frequently to the devil, especially in Northern Europe. Compare also the church-stories, &c., in a later part of this work.

[3] The usual place employed on such occasions in Finland and Esthonia.

gods to aid her. Ukko and Rōugutaja[1] both attended at her call, and one brought a bundle of straw, and the other pillows, and they made her up a soft bed; nor was it long before Kalev's posthumous son saw the light.

Linda was sitting by the cradle one day, trying to sing the child to sleep, when suddenly he began to scream, and continued to scream day and night for a whole month, when he burst his swaddling-clothes, smashed the cradle to pieces, and began to creep about the floor.[2]

Linda suckled the child till he was three years old, and he grew up a fine strong boy. He first learned to tend the cattle, and then to guide the plough, and grew up like a young oak-tree. When he played *kurni* (tipcat), his blocks flew far and wide all over the country, and many even as far as the sea. Sometimes he used to go down to the sea, and make ducks and drakes of huge rocks, which he sent spinning out to sea for a

[1] Ukko or Taara commonly appears as the principal god of the Finns and Esthonians; Rōugutaja usually as an accoucheur, but occasionally also as a malicious demon. Rōugutaja is also called the God of the Wind. Other authorities consider him a water-god. (Kreutzwald und Neus, *Mythische und Magische Lieder*, p. 108.)

[2] Kullervo in the *Kalevala* (Runo 30) bursts his swaddling-clothes and smashes his cradle in the same way.

verst or more, while he stood on his head to watch them.

At other times he used to amuse himself quietly in the enclosure, carving skates or weaving baskets. Thus he passed his days till he came to man's estate.

After the death of Kalev, Linda was much pestered by suitors who were anxious to marry the rich widow; but she refused them all, and at length they ceased to trouble her. Last of all came a mighty wind-sorcerer from Finland, calling himself Kalev's cousin; and when she refused him also, he vowed revenge. But she laughed at his threats, telling him she had three young eagles with sharp claws growing up in the house, who would protect their mother.

Linda was no longer tormented by suitors, but the magician whom she had discarded recommended all his friends not to seek a wife in Kalev's house, for notwithstanding Linda's wealth her beauty was faded, her teeth were iron, and her words were red-hot pincers. They would do better to sail to Finland, where they would find rows of maidens, rich in money, pearls, jewels, and golden bracelets, waiting for them on the rocky coast.

CANTO III

THE FATE OF LINDA

ONE hot day, the youngest son of Kalev was sitting on the top of a cliff watching the clouds and waves. Suddenly the sky became overcast, and a terrific storm arose, which lashed the breakers into foam. Aike,[1] the Thunder-God, was driving his brazen-wheeled chariot over the iron bridges of the sky, and as he thundered above, the sparks flew from the wheels, and he hurled down flash after flash of lightning from his strong right hand against a company of wicked demons of the air, who plunged from the rocks into the sea, dodged the thunderbolts among the waves,

[1] The Esthonian Thunder-God goes by a variety of names, but is usually called Pikker or Pikne, evidently the Perkunas of the Lithuanians. He resembles Thor in driving about in a chariot, waging war with the evil demons; but one of his attributes, not appertaining to Thor, is his flute (or bagpipe, as some critics regard it). It will be seen in many places that the Esthonians, like all other peoples among whom the belief in fairies, demons, &c., survives, do not share the absurd modern notion that such beings must necessarily be immortal.

and mocked and insulted the god. The hero was enraged at their audacity, and plunging into the water, dragged them from their hiding-places like crabs, and filled a whole sack with them. He then swam to the shore, and cast them out on the rocks, where the bolts of the angry god soon reduced them to a disgusting mass that even the wolves would not touch.

Another day, the three sons of Kalev went hunting in the forest with their three dogs.[1] The dogs killed a bear among the bushes, an elk in the open country, and a wild ox in the fir-wood. Next they encountered a pack of wolves and another of foxes, numbering five dozen of each, and killed them all. All this game the youngest brother bound together and carried on his back; and on the way home they found the rye-fields full of hares, of which they likewise secured five dozen.[2]

[1] Peter, in the story of the Lucky Rouble, is also attended by three black dogs. The dogs of the sons of Kalev were named Irmi, Armi, and Mustukene; the last name means Blackie, not Throttler, as Reinthal translates it.

[2] In the *Maha-Bharata* Bhima is represented as carrying enormous loads, and in one passage Yudhishthira is searching for his brother in the Himalayas, when he comes to a place where slaughtered lions and tigers are lying about by thousands, which convinces him that he is on the right track.

Meantime the Finnish sorcerer had been watching Kalev's house from his boat, where he remained in hiding among the rocks a little way from the shore, till he saw that the three young heroes had left the house and wandered far into the forest, leaving their home unprotected. The sorcerer then steered boldly to the shore, hid his boat, and made his way by devious and unfrequented paths to the house of Kalev, where he climbed over the low gate into the enclosure, and went to the door, but he looked cautiously round when he reached the threshold. Linda was just boiling soup over the fire when he rushed in, and, without saying a word, seized her by the girdle and dragged her away to his boat. She resisted him with tooth and nail, but he muttered spells which unnerved her strength and overpowered her feeble efforts, and her prayers and cries for help were unheard by men. But she cried to the gods for protection, and the Thunder-God himself came to her aid.

Just as the sorcerer was about to push off from the shore, Pikker darted a bolt from the clouds. His chariot thundered over the iron bridges of the sky, scattering flames around it, and the sorcerer was struck down senseless. Linda fled; but the

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gods spared her further sorrow and outrage by transforming her into a rock on Mount Iru.

It was a long time before the sorcerer woke from his swoon, when he sat up, rubbing his eyes, and wondering what had become of his prey; but he could discover no trace of her. The rock is now called "Iru's Stepmother;" and old people relate that when it was once rolled down into the valley, it was found next morning in its original place on the mountain.

The sons of Kalev were now making the best of their way home, sometimes along well-trodden paths or across the plains, sometimes wading through deep sand or mossy bogs, and then through forests of pine, oak, birch, and alder. The pine forest was called the King's Wood; the oak forest was sacred to the God Taara; the forest where the slender birch-trees grew was called the Maidens' Wood, and the alder-wood was sacred to mourners, and was called the Wood of the Poor Orphans.

As they passed through the pine forest which was called the King's Wood, the eldest brother sat down under a tree and began to sing a song. He sang till the leaves on the trees shone brighter than ever, and the needles on the fir-trees turned to

silken tassels, and the fir-cones gleamed purple in the sunshine. Acorns sprouted on the oaks, tender catkins on the birch-trees, and other trees were covered with sweet-scented snow-white flowers, which shone in the sunshine and glimmered in the moonlight, while the woods re-echoed with his singing, and the tones were heard far over the heaths and meadows, and the daughter of the king of Kungla wept tears of rapture.[1]

The second brother sat down in the birch-wood under a weeping birch-tree, and began to sing a song. As he sang, the buds unfolded and the flowers bloomed, the golden ears of corn swelled, and the apples reddened, the kernels formed in the nuts, the cherries ripened, red berries grew on the hills and blue berries in the marshes, while black berries grew at the edges of the swamps, yellow ones on the mossy hillocks, and the elder-trees were covered with rich purple grapes, while the woods re-echoed with the song, and its notes spread far over the heaths and meadows till the little water-nymphs shed tears of rapture.

[1] This passage would seem to indicate that the daughter of the king of Kungla was sometimes looked upon rather as a fairy than as a human princess.

The third brother sat down under a magnificent oak in the sacred oak-forest of Taara, and began to sing a song. As he sang, the wild beasts of the neighbouring woods and heaths gathered round him, and the cuckoos, doves, magpies, larks, nightingales, and swallows joined in the concert. The swans, geese, and ducks swam towards the sound, the waves of the sea beat on the rocks, and the crowns of the trees bowed down. The green hills trembled, and the clouds parted to permit the sky to listen to the singing, while the forest-king's daughter, the slender wood nymphs, and the yellow-haired water-nymphs wept tears of rapture and glowed with longing for the handsome singer.

Evening now approached, and the heroes made the best of their way homewards, the youngest, as before, loading himself with all the game. They looked out anxiously for the smoke of their home and the glow of the kitchen-fire, but they could discover nothing.

They quickened their pace as they crossed the deep sand of the heath, but no smoke nor fire nor steam from the kettle could be seen. They rushed into the house, but the fire was out and the hearth was cold. Again and again they shouted to their

mother, but there was no answer save the echo. The evening became darker and stiller, and the brothers went out to search in different directions. The youngest went down to the beach, where he found such traces of his mother's presence that he concluded that she had been carried off by her disappointed suitor, the Finnish sorcerer.

The eldest brother proposed that they should eat their supper and go to sleep, hoping that a dream might show them where to seek for their mother. The second assented, hoping that Ukko would send them a vision; but the youngest was unwilling to put off till to-morrow what might be done to-day, and finally determined to repair to his father's grave.[1]

> From his grave there spoke the father—
> "Who upon the sand is treading,
> With his feet the grave disturbing?
> In my eyes the sand is running,
> On my eyelids grass is pressing."

The youth told his father who he was, and all his trouble, and implored him to rise and help him. But his father answered that he could not rise, for the rocks lay on his breast, lilies of the

[1] Visits to a father's grave for counsel are very common in the literature of Northern Europe.

valley on his eyelids, harebells on his eyes, and red flowers on his cheeks. But he prayed the wind to show his son the right path, and a gentle zephyr to guide him on the way pointed out by the stars of heaven. So the young hero returned to the sea-shore and followed his mother's foot-prints till they were lost in the sea. He gazed over the sea and shore, but could detect no further traces of her, nor was any boat in sight. There he sat till it grew quite dark, and the moon and stars appeared in the sky; but winds and waves, sea and sky, moon and stars, alike were silent, and brought him no tidings of his mother.

CANTO IV

THE ISLAND MAIDEN

WHEN the Kalevide had satisfied himself that no further traces of his mother were to be found, he cast himself into the sea beneath the stars, and swam northwards manfully towards Finland, swimming with his hands, steering with his feet, and with his hair floating like a sail. He swam on till past midnight without meeting with a resting-place; but at length he espied a black speck in the distance, which proved to be a small rocky island. The hero discovered a mossy bank on a projecting rock, and made his way to the shore, and lay down, intending to sleep a little, when he was roused by the voice of a maiden singing a love-song. It was very dark and somewhat foggy, but he saw the light of a fire at a little distance at the foot of an oak-tree, beneath which sat a fair girl with brown eyes.[1] The hero soon joined

[1] The story in the *Kalevipoeg* is very confused, but this maiden

her, and they talked together for some time, when the maiden became alarmed at his familiarities, and cried out. Her mother awoke, and thought it was only a bad dream; but her father hastened to her aid, armed with a great club. But when he saw the terrible giant, he grew as pale as death, and his club dropped from his hand.

The maiden could not lift her eyes to her father, but the Kalevide asked carelessly if he had seen the Finnish sorcerer pass the island in his boat on the previous evening. "No," replied the islander, "I have not seen anything of him for weeks; but tell me your name and lineage, for I judge that you are of the race of the gods." The hero answered him fully; but when the maiden heard that he was the son of Kalev and Linda, she was seized with terror, and her foot slipping she fell from the cliff into the sea.

evidently corresponds to the lost sister of Kullervo (*Kalevala*, Runo 35), whom he meets casually, and seduces. When they discover the truth, the girl throws herself into a torrent. In the *Kalevipoeg*, Canto 7, the Kalevide and the maiden are actually spoken of as brother and sister. There are many versions of this story; in one of them (Neus, *Ehstnische Volkslieder*, pp. 5–8; Latham's *Nationalities of Europe*, i. p. 138), the maiden is represented as slaying her brother, who is called indifferently the son of Kalev or of Sullev, to the great satisfaction of her father and mother.

The father shrieked and wrung his hands, but the Kalevide plunged into the sea after the maiden, and sought for her for a long time in vain. When he abandoned the search, he did not venture to return to the island, but after crying out a few words of unavailing regret swam again towards Finland. The father's cry of despair fully roused the mother, who sprang up, and ran down to the shore, only to learn that her daughter was lost.

Then the mother took a rake with a long copper handle, and the father took his net, and with them they sought for their daughter's body at the bottom of the sea.[1] They did not find their daughter, but they raked up an oak-tree, a fir-tree, an eagle's egg, an iron helmet, a fish, and a silver dish. They took them all carefully home, and went again to seek for their lost child.

Then a song arose from the deep, telling how a maiden went down to the sea:[2]

What beheld she in the ocean?
What beneath the sea was shining?

[1] In the *Kalevala*, Runo 15, Lemminkainen's mother collects together the fragments of his body from the River of Death with a long rake.

[2] This song and story (except for the incident of the man of copper) resembles that of the drowning of Aino in the *Kalevala*, Runo 4.

From the sea a sword shone golden,
In the waves a spear of silver,
From the sand a copper crossbow.
Then to grasp the sword she hastened,
And to seize the spear of silver,
And to lift the copper crossbow.

Then there came a man to meet her;
'Twas an aged man of copper;[1]
On his head a helm of copper;
Wearing, too, a shirt of copper;
Round his waist a belt of copper;
On his hands were copper gauntlets;
On his feet were boots of copper;
In his belt were copper buckles,
And the buckles chased with copper;
Copper was his neck and body,
And his face and eyes were copper.
And the copper man demanded:
"In the sea what seeks the maiden,
Singing thus amid the waters,
She, a dove[2] among the fishes?"

And the maiden heard and hearkened,
And the little duck made answer:

[1] It was a copper man who rose from the water to fell the great oak-tree (*Kalevala*, Runo 2). Compare also the variant in Canto 6 of the *Kalevipoeg*. We may also remember the copper men connected with the mountain of loadstone (*Thousand and One Nights*, Third Calendar's Story).

[2] Literally a "house-hen;" one of those idiomatic terms of endearment which cannot be reproduced in another language.

"To the sea I went to rock me,
And amid the waves to carol;
And I saw the sword that glittered,
And the spear of silver shining,
And the copper crossbow gleaming.
And to grasp the sword I hastened,
And to seize the spear of silver,
And to lift the copper crossbow."

Then the copper man made answer,
With his copper tongue he answered:
"'Tis the sword of son of Kalev,
And the spear is son of Alev's,
And the crossbow son of Sulev's.
On the bed of ocean guarded,
Here the man of copper keeps them,
Of the golden sword the guardian,
Guardian of the spear of silver,
Guardian of the copper crossbow."

Then the man of copper offered her the weapons if she would take him as her husband, but she refused, saying that she was the daughter of a landsman, and preferred a husband from the village on the land. He laughed scornfully; her foot slipped, and she sank into the sea. Her father and mother came to seek her, and found only her ornaments scattered on the beach. They called her by her name, and implored her to go home with them; but she answered that she could not,

for she was weighed down by the water; and she related to them her adventure with the copper man. But she begged her parents not to weep for her, for she had a house at the bottom of the sea, and a soft resting-place in the ooze.

"Do not weep, my dearest mother,
Nor lament, my dearest father.
In the sea is now my dwelling,
On its bed a pleasant chamber,
In the depths a room to rest in,
In the ooze a nest of softness."

CANTO V

THE KALEVIDE AND THE FINNISH SORCERER

DAY was breaking as the dauntless swimmer approached the coast of Finland, where his enemy, the sorcerer, had arrived somewhat before him, and had made his boat fast under a projecting rock. The Kalevide gazed round without seeing any traces of him, and lay down to sleep; but though the morning was calm and peaceful, his dreams were but of battle and murder.

Meantime the islander and his wife, not being able to find their daughter, returned home weeping, and planted the oak and the fir in the field where their daughter used to swing in the evening, in remembrance of her. Then they went to look in the helmet where they had put the egg; but it was cold and damp, so the mother put the egg in the warm sun by day, and nursed it in her bosom at night.

Then they went to look at the trees, and the oak had already shot up a hundred fathoms, and the

fir-tree ten. Next they visited the fish, which prayed for its liberty, and they restored it to the sea.

The oak and fir now reached the clouds; and a young eagle was hatched from the egg, which the mother tended; but one day it escaped and flew away. The oak now scattered the clouds and threatened to pierce the sky. Then they sought a sorcerer to fell the tree, and the woman took a golden rake on her shoulder with a copper handle and silver prongs. She raked up three swathes of grass, and in the third she found the eagle which she had lately reared from the egg. She took him home, and under his wing was a little man, scarcely two spans high, holding an axe in his hands.[1]

The Kalevide had only intended to take a short nap, but he was so weary that he slept all through the day and night, and did not awake till sunrise next morning.[2] When he awoke, he set off at once

[1] We find this great oak-tree over and over again in Finnish and Esthonian tales. Compare *Kalevala*, Runo 2, and Cantos 4, 5, 6, and 16 of the *Kalevipoeg*. Neus, *Ehstnische Volkslieder*, p. 47; Kreutzwald and Neus, *Mythische und Magische Lieder*, p. 8, &c. Could this oak have any connection, direct or indirect, with the ash Yggthrasil? or could the story have originated in some report or tradition of the banyan?

[2] The tremendous exploits of the Kalevide and his weariness afterwards give him much of the character of a Berserk.

in search of his mother and the sorcerer into the interior of the country. At last he climbed a high mountain, and saw from thence an inhabited valley with a brook running through it, and the sorcerer's farm at the edge of the wood.

The son of Kalev rushed down the mountain and through the plain till he reached the gate of the enclosure and looked in. The sorcerer was lying on the grass in the shade of his house. The Kalevide turned towards the wood, tore up an oak-tree by the roots, and trimmed it into a club. He swung it in his right hand, and strode through the enclosure, the whole country trembling and the hills and valleys shaking with fear as he advanced.

The sorcerer started from his sleep, and saw Linda's avenger at the gate, but he was too unnerved and terrified to attempt to hide himself. He hurriedly took a handful of feathers from his bosom, and blew them from him with a few magic words, and lo! they became an armed host of warriors,—thousands of them, both on foot and on horseback.[1] They rushed upon the son of Kalev

[1] In the 26th Runo of the *Kalevala* Lemminkainen creates a flock of birds from a handful of feathers, to appease the fiery eagle who obstructed his way to Pohjola. We may also remember Jason and the dragon's teeth.

like a swarm of gnats or bees; but he laid about him with his club as if he was threshing, and beat them down, horse and man together, on all sides, like drops of hail or rain. The fight was hardly begun when it was over, and the hero waded chest-deep in blood. The sorcerer, whose magic troops had never failed him before, was now at his wit's end, and prayed for mercy, giving a long account of how he had endeavoured to carry off Linda, and had been struck down by the enraged Thunder-God. But the Kalevide paid no attention to his speech, and, after a few angry words, he smashed his head with his club. Then he rushed through the house from room to room in search of his mother, breaking open every door and lock which opposed him, while the noise resounded far over the country. But he found not his mother, and regretted that he had killed the sorcerer, who might have helped him. At last, wearied out with his own violence, he threw himself on a couch, and wept himself to sleep. He had a vision of his mother in her youth and beauty, swinging with her companions, and awoke, convinced that she was really dead.

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CANTO VI

THE KALEVIDE AND THE SWORD-SMITHS

THE Kalevide mourned two days for his mother, but on the third day he began to get over his grief, and determined, before returning home, to visit a famous smith of Finland, and to provide himself with a good sword. So he set off in another direction, and lost himself in the woods, and had to pass the night on the wet grass under a fir-tree, which he did not at all relish. Next morning he started off again early, and a thrush sang to him, and directed him to turn to the west. He sprang forward with renewed energy and soon found himself in the open country, where he encountered an old woman,[1] who gave him minute instructions for finding his way to the smithy, which was three days' journey off. When at length he reached the smithy, he found

[1] In the *Kalevala* (Runo 34) an old woman directs Kullervo to the house of his parents.

the old smith and his three sons hard at work forging swords.

The hero saluted the smith, who replied to him courteously, and at once acceded to his request to try the swords before purchasing one. At a sign from the smith, one of the sons went out and fetched an armful of swords. The Kalevide picked out the longest, and bent it into a hoop, when it straightened itself at once. He then whirled it round his head, and struck at the massive rock which stood in the smithy with all his might. The sparks flew from the stone and the blade shivered to pieces, while the old smith looked on and swore.

"Who mixes up children's toys with weapons for men?" said the Kalevide scornfully, and caught up a second and third sword, which he shivered in the same way before the smith could interfere. "Stop, stop," cried the smith at last, "don't break any more swords to show off your strength;" and he called to his sons to bring some swords of the best quality they had.

The youths brought in an armful of the very best, and the Kalevide chose a huge sword, which he brandished like a reed in his right hand, and

then brought down on the anvil. The sword cut deep into the iron, and the blade did not fly, but the sharp edge was somewhat blunted.

Then the smith was well pleased, and said that he had one sword in store worthy of the strength of the hero, if he was rich enough to buy it; for, between friends, the price was nine strong cart-horses, four pairs of good packhorses, twenty good milch kine, ten pairs of good yoke oxen, fifty well-fed calves, a hundred tons of the best wheat, two boatsful of barley, and a large shipload of rye, a thousand old dollars, a hundred pairs of bracelets, two hundred gold coins, a lapful of silver brooches, the third of a kingdom, and the dowries of three maidens.

Then from a little iron cupboard they fetched a sword which had not its equal in the world, and on which the smith and his sons had laboured for seven long years without intermission. It was wrought of seven different kinds of Swedish iron with the aid of seven powerful charms, and was tempered in seven different waters, from those of the sea and Lake Peipus to rain-water. It had been bespoken by Kalev himself, but he had not lived till the work was completed.

The son of Kalev received the huge blade from the hands of the smith with reverence, and whirled it round like a fiery wheel, and it whistled through the air like the tempest that breaks oaks and unroofs houses. Then he turned and brought down the keen edge like a flash of lightning on the great anvil, and clove it to the ground without the sword receiving the slightest injury.

Then the hero joyfully expressed his thanks to the smith for forging such a splendid sword, and promised to bring him the full price demanded upon his return to Esthonia. But the smith said he would rather go and fetch the value of the sword himself.

And now a great drinking-bout was prepared in honour of the sword and its owner, which lasted for seven days. Beer and mead flowed in abundance, and the guests drank till they lost all restraint, shouting and laughing, and throwing their caps about, and rolling on the grass.

The Kalevide had lost his senses like the rest, and told the whole story of his adventure on the island and the drowning of the maiden. Upon this, the eldest son of the smith, his father's pride and joy, sprang forward, denouncing him for his

aspersions on the maiden's honour. The Kalevide defied him, maintaining the truth of the story, and from words they soon came to blows; and, before any one could comprehend what was going on or interfere, the Kalevide drew the sword from its sheath and struck off the head of his adversary before the face of his father, mother, and brothers, the hero thus loading himself with a second great crime.

The youth's father shrieked with horror and his mother fell fainting to the ground; the smith then cried out to the Kalevide that he had murdered the support of his old age, and had stained the innocence and honour of his new sword for ever. Then he called to his sons to fetch the hammers from the smithy and break the bones of the murderer. But the drunken giant advanced against them with his sword, defying them to the combat; and the smith, recognising the hopelessness of any attempt against him, cried to his sons to let him pass and leave vengeance to the gods, cursing him like a mad dog, and calling on the sword itself to avenge the crime. But the Kalevide seemed to hear nothing, and staggered away from the house through the wood along the road till he

came to a high waterfall. He followed the course of the stream some distance till he found a resting-place, where he laid down, and snored till the whole neighbourhood shook, and people asked in fear whether enemies had invaded the land and a battle was in progress.

The oak which the islander had planted sprang up, first as a small tree, but it grew so rapidly that it reached the clouds, and almost touched the sun. The sun and moon were hidden, the windows darkened, and all the country around made dismal by the shadow of its branches. The islander sought far and near for some one to fell the tree, for whole cities and fleets might have been built of its wood. Proclamation was made everywhere for some one to fell the tree, but no one dared to attempt it, and he returned home, grumbling to his wife at the failure of his long and fruitless journey. Then the old woman led the way to the room where the eagle and the dwarf were still remaining, and told her husband how she had found the dwarf, who was no larger than Kalev's thumb, under the wing of the eagle. The islander asked the dwarf if he would fell the oak-tree, and he consented at once, on condition that

he should be released from his captivity; he was also given a dish of pure gold.

The dwarf went out and took a good look at the oak-tree, and then he himself began to grow, first by ells, and then by fathoms. Having thus become a giant, he began to hew at the tree, and he hewed at it for three days, till it fell, covering half the island and half the sea with its branches. The trunk was used to make a great bridge, with two arms, reaching from the island to Finland on the one side, and to Esthonia on the other. Large ships were built of the summit, merchant-vessels from the trunk, towns from the roots, rowing-boats from the branches, and children's boats from the chips. What remained was used to make shelters for weak old men, sick widows, and orphan children, and the last branches left were used to build a little room in which the minstrel could sing his songs. Strangers who came now and then across the bridge stopped before the minstrel's hut to ask the name of the city with the magnificent palace; and the minstrel replied that there was nothing there but his poor hut, and all the splendour they beheld was the light of his songs reflected from heaven.

CANTO VII

THE RETURN OF THE KALEVIDE

THE Kalevide slept till the following morning, and when at length he awoke he tried in vain to recollect the events of the day before. He could not remember whether he had been in Finland or on the island, or whether he had been engaged in battle. He had no remembrance of having slain the smith's son; but he got up half-dazed, and walked on without stopping till he reached the seashore on the third day afterwards. Here he found the sorcerer's boat; so he stepped into it, hoisted sail, and set off homewards.

Kalev's offspring was not weary,
For his back was like an oak-tree,
And his shoulders gnarled and knotted,
And his arms like trunks of oak-trees,
And like elm-trees were his elbows,
And his fingers spread like branches,
And his finger-nails like boxwood,
And his loins like hardened iron.

The Kalevide was now in high spirits, and began to sing a song, in which he pictured himself as going on a voyage, and meeting three shiploads of enchantresses, old and young, whose blandishments he resisted. But as he approached the shores of Esthonia, the fresh sea-breeze dispelled the mists that still clouded his memory, and the blood-stained sword and the splashes of blood on his clothes bore witness of the murder he had committed.

About midnight he approached the small island where the maiden had fallen into the sea, and the whole sad scene arose again before his imagination. And now he could hear the maiden singing a sad song beneath the waves, lamenting her sad fate, and yet more the evil lot of her brother, who had slain the son of his father's old friend.[1] The blood from the sword reddened the cheeks of the maiden, and a long and terrible penance lay before her brother.

For a while the hero sat lost in thought, bitterly lamenting the past; but presently he roused himself, and proceeded on his voyage, singing a lamentation for his mother beginning:

[1] The smith is sometimes called the uncle of Kalev; but the term may only mean that he was an old friend.

Where upgrows the weeping alder,
And the aspen of confusion,
And the pine-tree of distraction,
And the deep remorse of birch-tree?
Where I sorrow, springs the alder;
Where I tremble, sprouts the aspen;
Where I weep, the pine is verdant;
Where I suffer, sighs the birch-tree.

Next morning the Kalevide reached the shore, made fast the boat, and went homewards; but as he passed Mount Iru, where the form of his mother stood, his steps were arrested by the sweet singing of her unseen spirit in the wind. She sang how the young eagle had soared from the nest in youthful innocence, and had returned stained with crime. He knew now that his mother was dead, and realised more fully the two crimes which weighed upon his soul—the one committed thoughtlessly and without evil intent, and the other without his knowledge, when he was not master of himself. He hastened on, and when he reached home his brothers, who had long mourned him as dead, received him with open arms.

In the evening the three brothers sat together and related their adventures. The first sang how he had wandered in search of his mother over vast

regions, and through a great part of Courland, Poland, Russia, Germany, and Norway, and had met on his wanderings maidens of tin, copper, silver, and gold. But only the golden daughter of the Gold King could speak, and she directed him along a path which would lead him to a beautiful maiden who could reply to his question. He hurried on a long way, and at last met a rosy-cheeked maiden of flesh and bone, who replied to his questions that she had seen no traces of his mother, and the hawk must have flown away with her. But she invited him to her village, where he would find plenty of rich and beautiful maidens. He answered that he had not come to choose a wife, but to seek his mother.

Then the second brother sang how he also had wandered a long way, but at last reached a cottage where he found an old man and woman, whom he saluted and asked for tidings. They made no reply, and only the cat mewed in answer.

He went on farther, and met a wolf; but when he asked if he had seen his mother, he only opened his mouth to grin at him. Next he met the bear, who only growled, but finally the cuckoo[1] directed

[1] The cuckoo is a sacred bird, but more often alluded to in Finnish than in Esthonian literature.

him through a wood and across a green meadow to some maidens who would give him information. When he reached the spot, he found four beautiful maidens in elegant attire, who told him that they had been wandering about the woods and meadows every day, but had seen nothing of his mother, and they thought she must have flown away. They recommended him to seek a wife; but he answered that a young wife could not fill the place of his dear lost mother.

Then the youngest brother related his adventures; but he said nothing about the fatal brawl at the smith's feast, nor of the sad songs of the island-maiden and of the spirit of his mother.

Then the eldest brother remarked that they knew not what had become of their mother, but their parents were no more, and they must shift for themselves, so he proposed a trial to decide which of the three should rule as king in the land. The second brother agreed, and the third proposed that the trial should take place next day, and be decided according to the will of Taara.

In the evening, before twilight had quite given way to night, the youngest son took his handkerchief, which was wet with tears, and climbed up

his father's cairn. And his father asked from below:

"Who disturbs the sandy hillock,
With his feet the grave disturbing,
Stamping with his heels the gravel,
And the gravestone thus disturbing?"

The hero besought his father to rise up and stroke his hair and speak to him; but his father answered that he had long lain in his grave; his bones were decayed, and the grass and moss grew over him, and he could not rise. Let the wind and the sun caress his son. The son answered that the wind only blew sometimes, and the sun only shone by day, but Taara lives for ever. And the father told him not to weep or grieve, for the spirit of his dead father should follow him throughout his life, and that the good gods would protect him even through the desert wastes of the waters of the ocean; and he also counselled him to do his best to atone for every fault and error.

CANTO VIII

THE CONTEST AND PARTING OF THE BROTHERS

ON the following morning the three sons of Kalev set out before sunrise towards the south; but they rested under the trees and took some refreshment during the heat of the day. In the evening they passed a house which was lighted up as if for company. The father and mother stood at the door, and invited them to choose brides from among their rich and beautiful daughters. The eldest brother answered that they were not come to woo brides, and had no thought of marriage; but the second brother said he should like the girls to come out to swing with them; and they were forthwith summoned. Then the youngest brother said he hoped the young ladies would not distress themselves, but really he and his brothers had no idea of marrying at present, and they must beg to be excused.

Then they continued their journey southwards, and on the third day they reached a small lake with steep banks.[1] Water-birds were sporting in the lake, and on the opposite shore they saw the holy forest of Taara shining in the sunset. "Here is the place where our lot must be decided," said the eldest brother; and each selected a stone for the trial of strength. It was arranged that whoever should cast his stone across the lake to the firm ground opposite should be adjudged his father's heir, and the other two should wander forth to seek their fortunes in other lands.

The eldest brother, in all friendliness, claimed his right to the first trial, and cast his stone. It flew from his hand with the speed of a bird or of the tempest, but suddenly changed its direction, and plunged into the middle of the lake. The water foamed up over it, and entirely concealed it from sight.

The second brother then seized his stone, and sent it whistling through the air like an arrow. It rose up till it was nearly lost to sight, and then turned and fell on the shore close to the water, where it sank for half its bulk into the

[1] This lake (Saad jārv) lies a little north of Dorpat.

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mud. Then came the turn of the third, who, though the youngest, was much taller and stronger than his brothers.

The youngest brother made some sad reflections on his posthumous birth, and on the course of his childhood, and then cast forth his rock like a bird, or like a ship in a storm. It flew up far and high, but not up to the clouds, like that cast by his brother, and afterwards made great ducks and drakes across the whole lake, reaching at last the firm ground beyond.

"Don't let us wait here," said the eldest brother, "but let us go and look for the stones, and decide our competition." As the nearest way to the opposite shore was through the lake, they waded straight across it, and at the deepest place the water reached a little above their knees. The stone cast by the eldest brother had disappeared entirely in the water, and no trace of it could be found; but that thrown by the second was found on the shore half sunken in the mud. Only the stone thrown by the youngest brother, easily recognisable by its marks, was found on firm ground, lying on the grass at some little distance beyond the lake. Then the eldest brother declared

that the gods had plainly assigned the kingdom to the youngest, and that the others must now bathe him and adorn him as king.[1] After this the three brothers took an affectionate leave of each other, and the two elder ones wandered cheerfully away. The youngest sat on the rock sadly reflecting on the lost joys of youth, and how he must now depend on his own unaided efforts. At length he threw a silver coin into the water as an offering to the gods, an old custom now forgotten.

It was the duty of the new king both to plough the country and to defend it, and he therefore set to work with his sword by his side. Early and late he ploughed, stocking the country with corn, grass, trees, and berries.

One hot noonday, seeing his white horse[2] nearly exhausted, he unyoked him from the plough, hobbled him, and left him to graze, while he

[1] Nothing is said as to how the government was carried on during the Kalevide's minority.

[2] White horses constantly occur in Esthonian tales; and the devil's mother or grandmother usually appears as a white mare. One of the commentators remarks that as the white horse was sacred in pre-Christian times, the missionaries represented it as peculiarly diabolical. It will be remembered with what severity the early missionaries suppressed the horse feasts among the Teutonic tribes.

himself lay down in the grass and fell asleep. His head rested on the top of a hill, and his body and legs spread far over the plain below. The sweat ran from his forehead and sank into the earth, whence arose a healing and strengthening spring of wonderful virtues. Those who taste the water of this spring are greatly strengthened; weak children grow strong, the sick grow healthy; the water heals sore eyes, and even blindness; the weary are refreshed, and the maidens who taste it have rosy cheeks for their whole lifetime.

While the Kalevide lay asleep, he dreamed that he saw his good horse torn to pieces by wolves. And truly the horse had strayed away to some distance, when a host of wild animals, wolves, bears, and foxes, emerged from the forest. As the horse's feet were hobbled, he could not escape, and was soon overtaken. He defended himself as well as he could with hoofs and head, and killed many of the beasts; but he was finally overpowered by their ever-increasing numbers, and fell. Where he sank the ground is hollow, and a number of little hills represent the wolves killed in the struggle. The horse's blood formed a red lake, his liver a mountain, his entrails a

marsh, his bones hills, his hair rushes, his mane bulrushes, and his tail hazel-bushes.[1]

[1] This is a little like the formation of the world from the body of the giant Ymir, as described in the Edda. As W. Herbert paraphrases it,

"Of his bones the rocks high swelling,
Of his flesh the globe is made,
From his veins the tide is welling,
And his locks are verdant shade."

"Helga" is a somewhat poor production, containing but few striking passages except the description of the appearance of the Valkyrior before the fight between Hialmar and Angantyr. But the shorter poems at the end, "The Song of Vala" and "Brynhilda," ought to be alone sufficient to remove the name of this forgotten poet from oblivion.

CANTO IX

RUMOURS OF WAR

WHEN the Kalevide awoke, he followed the traces of his horse till he found the remains; and he secured the skin as a relic, cursing the wolves, and then drew his sword, and rushed into the wood in pursuit of them, breaking down the trees and bushes in his way, and destroying all the wild beasts he met with, while those who could fled to distant swamps and thickets. He would have utterly exterminated all the wolves and bears, if the increasing darkness of night had not compelled him at length to desist from further pursuit. He retired to the open country, and being wearied out, lay down to sleep on the skin of the horse. But he had scarcely closed his eyes before a messenger arrived from the elders of Esthonia, announcing that war had broken out, and that a hostile army was ravaging the country.

The Kalevide heard the long and woful story to an end, and then threw himself down again to sleep off his weariness, when another messenger arrived, whom he sharply upbraided for disturbing him.

The second messenger was a venerable old man with a white beard. He saluted the king, and apologised for disturbing him, but reminded him that when he was young the birds had sung to him that a ruler could know no rest:

> Heavy cares oppress the monarch,
> And a weighty load the ruler;
> Heavier yet a hero's burden:
> Thousand duties wait the strongest;
> More await the Kalevide!

He then spoke encouragingly to the king, assuring him that much would result from all his labours for the good of his people. The Kalevide answered that he would not shun toil and weariness, and would do his best. The old man assured him that nothing could prosper without the aid of the gods; and now the Kalevide recognised that Ukko himself spoke with him. Then the god exhorted him not to quarrel with destiny, and warned him to beware of his sword, for murder

could only be atoned for by murder, and he who had murdered an innocent man was never secure.

His voice died away in the wind, and the Kalevide sank into slumber till dawn; and when he awoke he could only recall vague fragments of the long discourse he had heard in his vision. He then gave the Esthonian messenger directions for the conduct of the war, and especially the defence of the coasts, asking to be particularly informed if the war should spread farther and the need grow greater, and then he himself would come at once; but he was compelled to rest a little from his fatigues before he could take part in the war in person.

Here is inserted the grand ballad of the Herald of War, from Neus, *Ehstnische Volkslieder*, p. 305. It is out of place in the *Kalevipoeg*, but will be included in a later section of our work.

CANTO X

THE HEROES AND THE WATER-DEMON

As the Kalevide was wandering through Esthonia, he arrived one day at the swamp of Kikerpärä. Two demon brothers had settled themselves in the swamp, and were fighting for its possession, and when the hero appeared they referred their dispute to him. As he could not stay to attend to the matter himself, he requested his friend, the son of Alev, who was with him, to measure out the swamp fairly. So the Alevide began to drive piles into the bed of the river at a place called Mustapall, to fasten his measuring lines to, when the wretched old water-demon[1] raised his head from the river, and asked what he was doing. The hero replied that he was damming up the river; but the demon, who had lived under the water for many years, and

[1] The Esthonian demons are often represented as contemptible creatures, very easily outwitted. Later in the present canto the personage in question is distinctly called a water-demon.

did not like to be turned out of his comfortable home, offered him a reward to desist. So the Alevide asked him to fill his old felt hat for him with bright silver coins; which he promised to do on the morrow, the hero declaring that he would hold him to his bargain in the words of the proverb:[1]

> By the horns the ox we grapple,
> By his word the man is fastened.

Then the demon dived back into the water, while the son of Alev, who was a cousin of the Kalevide, got a friend to help him to dig a hole in the ground during the night, a fathom in depth and broad at the bottom, but with an opening at the top just wide enough for the top of the hat to fit into; but the hat was cut at the sides, so that the heavy money should fall through into the pit.

Before daybreak the stupid demon brought a lapful of roubles,[2] which he poured into the hat. He brought a second and a third, and afterwards brought money by the hogshead, but the hat still remained empty. Presently his coffers, purses, and

[1] A common proverb in Esthonian tales. We also find it in Italian, in almost the same words.

[2] The money is sometimes called roubles, and sometimes thalers.

pockets were all exhausted. He then begged for time; but the Alevide declared that if he did not keep his promise, and fill his hat with bright silver coins, he should begin his work again.

Then the demon thought of appealing to his mother to help him; but first he asked the Alevide to come with him to receive his money himself, hoping to circumvent him. But the hero knew that it was only a trick to get him away from the hat, so he refused to budge, but sent the Kalevide's cupbearer, the smallest of the company, to help to carry the money.

The boy was ready at once; but his heart failed him as the demon preceded him to the under-world,[1] leading him by paths that no living man had ever trodden before, and through an utterly unknown country, where the sun and moon never shone, and where the only light came from the torches that flared on both sides of their way. When they reached the palace of the demon, his sons came to the door, and invited the guest to take his place at the table, which was loaded with gold and silver plate, and eat and drink. But the

[1] Visits to Hades or Hell (Põrgu) are common in the *Kalevipoeg* and in the popular tales, some of which we shall afterwards notice.

boy could touch nothing from terror, for sparks of fire flew from the dishes and viands, and blue flames played over the beakers.

Then the water-demons began to titter, and to whisper to each other in their own language, which sounded just like Lettish,[1] and which their guest could not understand. The boy began to reproach his avaricious friend in his thoughts for having thus sent him to Põrgu without thinking of what might happen to him; but presently the younger demons seized upon him, and began to toss him from one to another like a ball, sometimes from one side of the room to the other, and sometimes up to the ceiling.

The boy begged them to let him rest a little, and presently they allowed him to do so. Then he drew a cord from his pocket, and pretended to measure the length and breadth of the room. Presently he came to the door, and seized the opportunity to bolt, and was fortunate enough to make his way back to daylight, where the demon had no more power to interfere with him.

[1] The term "Lett," which the Kalevide himself afterwards applies to the demon, seems to be used in contempt; otherwise the passage in the text might have been taken as equivalent to our old-fashioned expression, "It's all Greek to me."

As he passed the gates, the guards whispered to him to turn to the right to avoid the many snares in his path. He did not escape without a good fright; for only strong men can go where they please, like the birds, while the weak man is exposed to a thousand terrors. On the boy's way he met a small bitch[1] accompanied by two puppies; and this was the mother of the demons, just returning from the bath-house. The boy now remembered the warning he had received, and turned aside to the right, and the three ran past without noticing him.

When the boy reached the place where he had left the Alevide, he found that both his friend and the money had disappeared. Presently the water-demon came up, and asked him jestingly whether he had burnt himself, or whether he had been stung by a gadfly, that he ran away like that, instead of helping him to carry the heavy money-bags. He then proposed that they should look for a good place where they might wrestle. He thought he could easily overcome the boy by strength, if not by craft, and the boy consented.

[1] Usually the devil's mother (or grandmother) is represented as a white mare. Compare Canto 14 of the *Kalivepoeg*, and also the story of the Grateful Prince.

Before they had gone far, they met the sons of Kalev and Alev, who had hidden their treasure, walking arm-in-arm. The Kalevide asked, "Whence did you bring that Lettish comrade, and to what queer race does he belong?" His cousin answered that he was the same who had promised to fill his hat with silver, and hadn't kept his word. Then the boy said that they were going to engage in a contest, and the Kalevide answered, "You must grow a little taller, my lad, before you engage in a serious struggle, for you are only a child at present."

So the Kalevide, laughing, stuck the boy in his trouser-pocket to grow, and took over the challenge himself, and they all went to a mountain where the contest was to take place; and first they began with hurling stones. The demon took up a rock, which he balanced for an hour in his clumsy fingers, and at last swung it round more than ten times before he loosed it. The stone fell ten paces from the sandy shore of Lake Virts, and it lies there now, conspicuous by its size, for it is at least as big as a bath-house.

Then the Kalevide took up a rock in his hand, and threw it without more ado. They heard it rushing through the air for a long time, and at

last it fell on the shore of Lake Peipus, and any one who visits the lake can see it there. Then they engaged in a wrestling match, and the Kalevide soon lifted the demon from his feet and flung him into the air. When he came to the ground, he rolled seven versts, and then fell down a little hill among the bushes, where he lay stunned for seven days, hardly able to open his eyes or lift his head, or even to move a limb.

At this the Kalevide and his companions laughed till the hills shook, and the cup-bearer loudest of all. Then the Alevide told his story; but when he came to mention the proverb, it reminded the son of Kalev that he had not yet paid the debt which he owed to the smith in Finland for his sword. So the Kalevide asked his cousin to take the goods across to Finland, and he himself laid down to rest under a tree, and pondered on how he could provide for the safety of the people during the war. He decided to improve and beautify the towns as well as to fortify them, and to make an excursion to survey the country while his cousin was away in Finland. Presently the Kalevide felt in his pocket, and pulled out the boy, with whom he began to jest; but soon their conversation became more serious,

and the Kalevide ordered him to wait for the expected messengers, while he himself should proceed to Lake Peipus, where he had important business.

As the Kalevide proceeded on his journey, he passed a well in a lonely place, where the Air-Maiden,[1] the fair daughter of the Thunder-God, sat bewailing the loss of her ring, which had dropped into it.[2] When the hero saw the blue-eyed, golden-haired maiden in tears, he asked the cause of her trouble, and when he heard it he plunged into the well to look for the ring. A party of young sorcerers quickly gathered round, thinking that the mouse was in the trap, and they flung a great millstone after him. But he searched in the mud and water for some time, and presently sprang out of the water with the millstone on his finger, which he offered to the maiden, saying that he had not been able to find anything else in the mud, and that she would not need a larger finger-ring.

[1] This Air-Maiden, who seems to be only a mischievous sprite, must not be confounded with Ilmatar, the creatrix of the world in the first Runo of the *Kalevala*.

[2] Finn, the Irish hero, was once entrapped by a sorceress on a similar pretext into plunging into an enchanted lake, which changed him into an old man. (See Joyce's *Old Celtic Romances*, "The Chase of Slieve Cullin.") The story is also related in one of Kenealy's ballads.

CANTO XI

THE LOSS OF THE SWORD

NEXT morning the Kalevide arose at dawn, and hurried on towards Lake Peipus, clearing and levelling the country as he went. When he arrived at the lake, there was no boat to be seen; so he girded himself, and plunged into it at a point where it was too wide to see the opposite shore, while the fish fled before him as he waded through.

On the shore opposite, a hideous sorcerer was hiding in the bushes. He was as bristly as a wild boar, with wide mouth and small oblique eyes.[1] He was well skilled in all magic; he could make the wind blow from any quarter, could

[1] This is a well-known Mongol characteristic; and it is rather oddly attributed by Arabic writers to the Jinn. "Two of them appeared in the form and aspect of the Jarm, each with one eye slit endlong, and jutting horns and projecting tusks."—Story of Tohfat-el-Kulub (*Thousand and One Nights*, Breslau edition).

remove ill from one man to cast it on another, and could cause quarrels between the best friends. He had evil demons at his beck and call; but for all that, he could cure all hurts and diseases when he pleased. But to-day he was in a bad humour, and blew a tremendous storm against the son of Kalev. Presently he saw a human form struggling through the waters, which reached to his girdle. Even at four or five miles' distance the figure seemed as large as a man, and he appeared to be heavily laden. Sometimes the water hid him from view, but as he came nearer the form became ever huger and more terrible.

The Kalevide laughed at the raging storm, and said to the lake, "You nasty little puddle, you're wetting my girdle." He had taken scarcely an hour in his passage, when he reached the firm ground, carrying a load of planks which a horse or a pair of oxen could hardly have dragged along. He had brought them from Pleskau to build a refuge for his people; over twenty dozen planks, three inches thick, an ell broad, and ten yards long. He drew his sword to trim the timber, and the sorcerer determined to reward himself for his late exertions in raising the tem-

pest by possessing himself of it; but this was no the time for action, and he slunk deeper into the shades of the forest.

The Kalevide was tired with his journey, and found a level place some little distance from the shore, so he brought a lapful of shingle from the beach and a quantity of sand, and made himself a comfortable bed in a dry spot. Then he refreshed himself with bread and milk from his wallet, loosed his girdle, laid his sword beside him, and soon fell asleep, with his head to the west and his feet to the east, that the first rays of the morning sun might shine in his eyes and awaken him. Presently the ground shook, and the woods re-echoed, and the billows of the lake rose in answer to his snoring, which sounded like the Thunder-God driving three-in-hand through the clouds.

The sorcerer now stole from his hiding-place, and advanced towards the sleeping giant with cat-like steps; but he tried in vain to steal the good sword from its master's side by his incantations. Neither commands nor supplications would avail, and he was forced to use stronger spells. So he scattered rowan-leaves, thyme, fern, and other magic herbs over the sword, and at last it inclined

towards the sorcerer, and he took it in his arms. The huge weapon weighed him to the ground, and he was only able to struggle along painfully under its weight, step by step, with the sweat pouring from his face; but still he would not relinquish his booty. Presently he came to the brook Käpä, and jumped over it; but the sword slipped from his arm, and sank in the mud in the deepest place. He renewed his incantations, but was now quite unable to repossess himself of the sword, and on the approach of dawn he fled into the forest, to hide from the vengeance of its owner.

When the Kalevide awoke, he rubbed the sleep out of his eyes and felt for his sword, but it had disappeared. He could see its traces where it had been dragged away, and he followed on its track, calling to the sword as to a brother, and beseeching it to answer him, and not to let him search in vain. But there was no reply, and then he tried a song, but still there was no reply, and he searched everywhere for the sword, till at last he saw it shining at the bottom of the water.

Then the Kalevide asked the sword who had stolen it and sunk it in the water, and the sword

sang in reply how the sorcerer had carried it off, and how it had slipped from his grasp into the water, into the embraces of the fairest of the water-nymphs. The Kalevide answered, "Does my sword prefer to lie in the arms of a water-nymph rather than to feel the grasp of a hero in battle?" The sword reminded the Kalevide of the terrible murder in Finland, which it declared it could never forget, and the hero abandoned the weapon to its sweet repose, saying that he relied on his own strength to overcome his enemies in battle. But he laid his commands on the sword that if any heroes of his race, Kalevides, Alevides, or Sulevides, should come to the spot, then the sword should address them in words. If a great singer came, the sword was to sing to him; if a hero as brave and as strong as the Kalevide himself should come to the brook, then the sword was to rise from its bed and join him; but if the man himself who had brought the sword there should come that way, then the sword was to cut off both his feet.

By this he meant the sorcerer, but he expressed himself ambiguously.

The son of Kalev then left the brook, took the boards on his back, and set out for home. On his

journey he passed through a pine forest which belonged to men, a leafy forest sacred to women, and a hazel thicket, the last refuge of the maidens, the orphans, and the sick. Here his foot touched something soft, which he found to be a man of about the stature of our present race, who was quaking with fear and besought his protection. The Kalevide took him up kindly by the hair, and dropped him into his wallet, where he fell as down a deep precipice, till he came to a stop among the bread and herrings at the bottom. Then the hero asked him what had frightened him so much.

Up from the bottom of the bag came a voice like the croaking of a frog from the bottom of a deep well, and this was the man's story:—"Yesterday evening I was wandering on the shores of Lake Peipus, and lost my way. Presently I came to a footpath which led me to a poor hut, where I thought to find a night's lodging. I came into a great empty room, where an old woman was standing by the hearth preparing supper. She was cooking half a pig in a great pot with peas, and kindly gave me a cupful, but told me to eat my supper quick. As soon as I had finished, she told me to hide among the straw which she had laid under the table, and

to lie as still as a mouse, for if I only moved a finger after her sons returned, they would be sure to kill me. I thanked the good old woman, and crept into the straw, where three men could easily have hidden themselves; and I hoped to sleep. But presently I heard steps approaching which shook the house; and whether or not it was my fear that makes me think so, I fancy, noble scion of the Kalevides, that even your heavy tread never made such a noise.

"The two brothers rushed into the room like wild bears, and one of them sniffed about the room and said, 'Mother, who has been here? I smell man's sweat.' 'Nobody has even been near the house to-day, my son,' answered the old woman. 'If you smell anything, you must have brought the smell with you from out of doors.'

"Then she gave them their supper, and they ate as much as would have satisfied fifty of our race, and left something over. Then they laid themselves down on the hard floor, one on each side the table, while the old woman crept cautiously up the ladder to her couch above the stove.

"Poor wretch that I am! if I had ever expected to find myself in such a position, I would rather have drowned myself in the lake or thrown myself

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over a precipice. I could not sleep a wink all night, and when the old woman opened the door in the morning I crept behind her, and fled through two woods till I reached the third, where you found me."

This was the poor man's story, and the Kalevide laughed heartily at the recital.

CANTO XII

THE FIGHT WITH THE SORCERER'S SONS

AS the Kalevide proceeded on his way, carrying his heavy load of planks, the sorcerer's three sons rushed upon him from an ambush close to a high waterfall which foams over steep rocks. He had been walking quietly along, and the man in his wallet had fallen comfortably asleep. The villains sprang upon the hero from behind, armed with slender young birch-trees and dry pine-trunks. Two of them carried long whips, the handle formed of strong beech-wood, and the lash armed with a great millstone, with which they belaboured the hero unmercifully. He had just armed himself with a huge club, in case he should be assaulted in passing through the wood. It was a great pine-trunk from which he had broken the crown. It was five-and-thirty ells long, and two feet thick at the thick end, and with this he could defend himself as with a sword.

The Kalevide tried at first to remonstrate with his assailants, but as they continued to annoy him he rushed upon them with his club. The pine club was soon splintered, the fragments flying in all directions, and then the Kalevide defended himself with the planks which he was carrying, and at every blow he smashed one on the backs of his enemies. Presently his load was nearly exhausted, and the sorcerer's sons, hoping now for an easy victory, pressed him more hardly, when suddenly he heard a little voice crying from the bushes, "Dear son of Kalev, strike them with the edges!"[1] The hero at once took the hint, and, instead of striking with the flat side of the planks, began to strike with the sharp edges, and his enemies soon fled before him, howling like wolves. If the savages had not been thoroughly hardened by long exposure to heat and cold by day and night, he would have left them dead on the field.

The Kalevide sat down to rest after the battle, and called to his dear brother, who had aided him, to show himself. But his friend answered

[1] This reminds us of the help given to Hiawatha by the woodpecker during his fight with Megissogwun; but the one incident can hardly be copied from the other. *Hiawatha* was published some years before the *Kalevipoeg*.

that he could not venture out into the open, for he was only a poor naked little hedgehog. So the hero called to him to come, and he would clothe him. The hedgehog crept out of his warm nest, naked and shivering, and the hero cut a piece from the lining of his own coat, and gave it to the hedgehog, who joyfully wrapped himself in the warm covering. But the piece was not large enough to cover him entirely, and his legs and belly remained naked as before.

The Kalevide now wanted to sleep, but he was in the midst of a swamp. He therefore fetched a load of sand from the distant sandhills, to make himself a bed. He then felt into his bag for something to eat, when his thumb came against the cold stiff body of his little friend, who had been killed in his sleep by a chance blow during the fight, without having had time to cry out or move a limb. He was much grieved at the untimely death of his *protégé*, and dug him a grave with his own hands, round which he planted berry-bearing bushes. Then he ate his supper and fell asleep, to dream of the events of the past day.

While he was asleep, the sorcerer himself crept

to his side, and by his spells and incantations, and the use of magic herbs, threw him into a deep slumber, which lasted for days and nights. Presently a messenger came in haste to summon the king, and the cup-bearer directed him to Lake Peipus; but no one had seen or heard anything of him.

On a fine summer's day, the people flocked from all parts of the country to the sacred hill of Taara for a great festival, and as yet there came no news of the king. Summer faded into autumn, and the Kalevide still slept on, but he was dreaming of a new sword, much better than the uncle of his father Kalev had forged for him, which was forged in an underground smithy.

This sword had been forged by the pupils of Ilmarine[1] in a workshop in the interior of a great mountain at the middle point of the earth, the peak of which was lost in the clouds. Seven strong smiths wrought it with copper hammers, the handles of which were of silver, and one of their company turned it on the fire or laid it on the anvil with tongs of the purest silver, while Ilmarine himself watched every stroke of the hammers.

[1] This is the only passage in the *Kalevipoeg* in which one of the heroes of the *Kalevala* is personally introduced.

Presently a young man entered, pale and covered with blood, and he only touched his cap without further salutation, and cried out to the workmen not to waste the sword on the murderous son of Kalev, who could slay his best friends in his rage. The Kalevide tried to cry out that it was false, but the son of the old Tübja[1] oppressed him with a nightmare, and he could not utter a word; he felt as if a mountain lay upon his breast, and the sweat ran from his face.

On the following morning the Kalevide awoke from his sleep. He knew that the vision of the smithy was a dream, but he was not aware that he had slept for seven weeks without intermission. He found that his planks were nearly all destroyed, and determined to fetch a fresh load from Pleskau.

When he came to the lake, he heard a boy shouting for help. It was a herd-boy, whose favourite lamb was being carried off by a wolf. He killed the wolf with a stone,[2] and then stood by the lake considering what to do next. Presently he decided to build a bridge across the "puddle;"

[1] Emptiness; probably the Contemptible One; a name often used for one of the principal demons.

[2] The rock is still shown, bearing the imprints of the hero's fingers, each cleft large enough to hold a man.

and built it out into the lake for perhaps a couple of miles, when a great storm arose and swept away the unfinished structure. When he saw his work destroyed, he said, "Why didn't I wade straight through, as I did before, instead of wasting my time like this?" So he caught a supply of crayfish, which he roasted and ate, and then set out on his journey through the water.

On the shores of Lake Peipus lived a poor orphan boy, who had lost all dear to him by famine, pestilence, and war, and who was now compelled to slave as herd-boy for a hard mistress,[1] and to mind the children as well as to look after the sheep and goats. He sang sad songs, till at length the wood-nymph took compassion on him, and sang to him one evening from the summit of an oak-tree, telling him that good luck would be his in the morning. Next morning he found a lark's egg hidden among leaves, which he hid in his bosom next his heart wrapped in wool and a strip of linen. A mouse was hatched from it, which he fostered in the same way till it became

[1] This was the fate of Kullervo himself in the *Kalevala*. Orphans, for whom much sympathy is expressed, constantly appear in Esthonian tales. Compare p. 236 of the present volume.

a kitten, a puppy, a lamb, and at length a sheep[1] with fine white wool, and the sheep was so dear to the boy that he left off weeping and lamenting, and always felt happy and contented, though his lot was still a hard one.

[1] We have a similar series of transformations (mouse, cat, dog, ass, buffalo) in the story of Noor Ed-Deen and Shes Ed-Deen in the *Thousand and One Nights*.

CANTO XIII

THE KALEVIDE'S FIRST JOURNEY TO HADES

ON the Kalevide's homeward journey he slept for a night at the place where his sword had been stolen, and set out early next morning, making his way through bush and brake. He walked on till sunset with his load of planks without stopping to rest, and then ate his supper and prepared himself a bed of sand as usual. When he awoke in the morning, a magpie informed him for the first time that the sorcerer had kept him in a magic sleep for seven weeks, and he quickened his pace. But when he reached Lake Ilma he found it, to his disgust, too deep to wade through, and he was compelled to go round it.

Presently he encountered an old witch, a relative of the sorcerer who had done him so much harm already, sitting among the bushes and singing magic songs. The hero stopped to rest himself, for the day

was very warm, and listened to her song, which was a long charm against snake-bites. Then he walked on till noon, when he took a siesta, breaking down trees of all kinds to make himself a couch. Afterwards he turned to the left in the direction of Lake Endla, and towards evening he came to the entrance of a cavern, before which a great fire was burning. A huge caldron hung over it by heavy iron chains, just opposite the entrance to the cavern, and three fellows were standing round, who grinned and whispered to each other as the stranger approached.

The Kalevide threw down the planks and asked the men what they had got in the caldron, and whether they were getting ready for a feast or a wedding. They replied that the caldron cooked for everybody, and that when they made a feast they killed a great ox. It took a hundred men to kill it, five hundred to bleed it, and a thousand to cleanse it.[1] But to-day they were only cooking for poor people; only half an elk, the ribs of an old boar, the lungs and liver of a bear, the suet of a young wolf, the hide of an old bear, and an egg

[1] We meet with this big ox elsewhere in the *Kalevipoeg* (Canto 19), as well as in the *Kalevàla*, Runo 20.

from an eagle's nest. Old Sarvik[1] and the old mother were to dine from it; the cat and dog were to get their share, and the rest was to be divided among the cooks and workmen; but the old mother was going to bake cakes for the young ladies' dinner.

The Kalevide expressed his disgust at such cookery, but they told him it was good enough for witches and sorcerers, and he then asked them to show him the way to their master's house, as he wished to pay his respects to the family. They warned him that he might not escape easily; but as he persisted, they directed him to the cavern, which he immediately entered, while the demons laughed, saying that the bear had fallen into the trap and the lion[2] into the net, and that he was carrying his hide to market for nothing.

The cave was so dark and narrow that the hero soon found himself obliged to creep on all fours, and to grope his way. At last he perceived a faint light at a distance, and the cavern enlarged so much that he could now stand upright again.

[1] Old Hornie, the name of the ruler of Põrgu (Hell).

[2] The word used for lion is "*lõwi*," undoubtedly derived from the German. The Finns generally call the lion "*jalopeura*," which also denotes the lynx.

Where the roof rose highest, a heavy lamp hung by chains from the ceiling, and beyond it were great folding-doors. On each side stood a jar, one filled with a liquid as white as milk, and the other with a liquid as black as pitch. Inside he could hear maidens spinning and singing,[1] lamenting the happiness of their former lives, and hoping that some deliverer might appear. Then he strove to force the door, but it resisted all his efforts, so he sang a song in his softest tones, telling how he had encountered four fair maidens gathering flowers in the woods. The maidens sang back that he had come at a good time, for all the family were out, and they directed him to dip his hands in the dark liquid, which would give him magic strength; but if he wished to moderate his strength, then to dip his hands in the white liquid, for the dark liquid would give him strength to dash everything to pieces.

The hero dipped his hands in the dark liquid, and felt his strength redoubled. He pushed against the door again, and the door and door-posts too came thundering to the ground. The maidens fled into the adjoining room, crying out

[1] Compare the story of the Gold Spinners.

to him not to approach them till he had dipped his hands in the white liquid, which would remove the enchantment. He laughed, and, notwithstanding their entreaties, followed them into the next room, where he saw a naked sword, a small willow wand, and a ragged old hat hanging on the wall. "Look," cried he joyfully, "this is the sword which I saw forged for me in my dream!"

"Beware," said one of the maidens, "do not touch that sword, for it belongs to Sarvik; but take the rod and the hat, for they are yours, and you can work any wonders with them. Swords you can only obtain from the smith himself."

But the Kalevide answered that he could have his will without the wishing-rod and cap, which were only fit for witches and wizards. So the maiden, who was anxious to convince him of the value of the treasures which he despised, took down the hat from its peg. It was made of the cuttings of finger-nails,[1] and she declared that there was not

[1] We meet with a similar hat in other stories. Many Esthonians and Lithuanians still hide their nail-parings as carefully as possible, or else make a cross over them lest the devil should find them and use them to make a wishing-hat. Can this hat have any connection with the white straw hat of the devil in a Deptford rhyme?—Gomme's *Traditional Games*, I. p. 4. In the Edda, we are told that Naglfar, the largest ship in the world, which is to bring the

another like it in the world, for it could fulfil every desire of its possessor. So she put it on her head and said—

> "Raise thee, raise thee, golden[1] maiden,
> Blue-eyed maiden, raise thee, raise thee,
> Like unto the son of Kalev,
> Like unto thy friend in stature."

She began at once to grow taller, ell after ell, till she grew fully as tall as the son of Kalev himself.

Then the Kalevide took the hat from her head and set it on his own, wishing to become as small as she had been. His stature immediately sank, ell after ell, till he was reduced to the size of an ordinary man.[2] The young giantess took back the hat, and wished to resume her former stature, which accordingly befell.

The Kalevide then said to the maiden that he would willingly remain a little boy that day for her sake, but he was now anxious to keep the hat, that he

giants to the fight at Ragnarök, is similarly constructed, and as both gods and men wish that it should be completed as late as possible, every one should be very careful not to die with unpared nails, lest he should supply materials for its construction.

[1] Golden is often used in Finnish and Esthonian, as in many other languages, as a term of endearment.

[2] The maidens were afterwards married to the relatives of the Kalevide, giants like himself, and are described as walking arm-in-arm with them, nothing being then said of any difference in their stature.

might at once resume his own stature and strength in case of any sudden and unexpected danger. They sang and danced and sported to their heart's content, and the maiden called her second sister, whose duty it was to polish the gold, silver, and copper ware; and her third sister, who tended the geese on the common; and the sisters locked and bolted the kitchen door, for fear the old woman should hear the noise and come to disturb their merriment.

The maidens were delighted, for though the Kalevide declared that he could not think of marrying a wife himself, he would deliver them from Hades next day, and would marry one to the son of Alev, one to the son of Sulev, and one to the cup-bearer.[1] So they played all sorts of games; the falcon-game, in which the hero was the falcon, and they were the birds; kiss-in-the-ring, blind man's buff, &c. But whatever they played at, the hero always got the best of the game. When they were tired of this amusement, they put out all the lights.

[1] This reminds us of a well-known feudal custom, more honoured in the breach than in the observance, which also prevailed among the old kings of Scotland for several reigns. The second sister was ultimately married, not to the cup-bearer, but to the son of Olev.

CANTO XIV

THE PALACE OF SARVIK

THE sisters were sorry to see the dawn of day, though they were no longer obliged to spin and weave, for the old woman was locked up in the kitchen, and could not interfere with them. That day they amused themselves by showing their guest all over the house, and all the treasure-chambers, but they blushed and dropped their eyes whenever he looked at themselves.

Presently they passed through a stone door into a stone gallery, likewise paved with stone, and after passing through it for some little distance, arrived at a room in which the walls and furniture were wholly of iron. "This," said the eldest sister, "is the room of old Sarvik, where his men-servants assemble and work or amuse themselves, and where they are sometimes tortured in all sorts of ways."

They left this room through an iron archway which opened into a gallery of iron, which they followed for some distance till they reached a second room, entirely of copper, and with copper furniture. "This," said the eldest sister again, "is old Sarvik's room, where the maids assemble to work or amuse themselves, and where, too, they are punished and tormented."

From this room they passed through a copper archway into a copper gallery, which led them presently to a third room of silver, with silver furniture and fittings, and the chests in the corners were filled with silver coins. Then said the second sister, "This is old Sarvik's room, where he spends most of his time, and where he sleeps and refreshes himself."

They passed from this room into a silver gallery, which led them into a room of gold, with gold fittings and furniture, and the chests in the corners were filled with gold coins. "This," said the second sister again, "is old Sarvik's room, where he feasts and amuses himself. I was busy yesterday for hours sweeping this room and polishing up all the gold."

From this room they went through a golden

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gallery to a fifth chamber, which was of silk, and everything in it was silk. The walls were hung with silken raiment, and the chests in the corners were filled with silken stuffs. "This," said the youngest sister, "is the maidens' room, where they deck themselves out in silk on gala days."

They passed through a silken gallery into a chamber of satin, of which she gave a similar explanation. From this they passed to a lace chamber, where the little girls decked themselves out.

The lace gallery from this room led them out into the enclosure, which was paved with silver coins instead of grass.

Round the court stood seven storehouses, the first composed of a single block of granite, the second of plates of iron, the third of hens' eggs, the fourth of goose-eggs, the fifth of polished quartz, the sixth of the finest eagles' eggs, and the seventh of eggs of the Siuru.[1]

The barns were filled respectively with rye,

[1] A mythical blue bird, the daughter of Taara. Two songs respecting her will be found in another part of the book. Reinthal improperly translates the word "griffin." "Phœnix" or "Seemurgh" would have been a more appropriate rendering.

barley, oats, wheat, maize, vegetables, and the last with lumps of lard and tallow.

At the back of the enclosure stood cattle-stalls, constructed of all sorts of bones.

The Kalevide did not care to look at these things long, but asked the sisters to tell him all they could about Sarvik.

"We can't tell you anything about his birth and parentage," answered the eldest sister. "We don't know if a bear was his father and a wolf his mother, or whether a mare suckled him and a goat rocked him in the cradle.

"He has large estates, which occupy much of his time, and he makes long journeys secretly in an incredibly short time; but no one has seen or heard which way he goes or what places he visits. Everybody can see him going out and coming in, but nothing further is known about his movements. It is said that there is a vast space in the centre of the earth where he rules over seven worlds; seven islands, very thickly populated with the souls of the departed, where they live in large villages, and are subject to old Sarvik, as the wisdom of Taara has decreed from the beginning of the world.

"Sarvik rules his subjects with great severity; but once a year, on All Souls' Day, they are permitted to revisit their homes, to see and salute their friends and relatives. They rush up in shoals, on these occasions, to the places which they once inhabited in joy or grief; but as soon as their time is over they are compelled to return, each to his own dwelling."

The second sister added, "Old Sarvik selects his workmen and maids from this kingdom, and they are forced to follow him, and perform hard tasks for him in the iron and copper chambers; and if they fail in anything, they are beaten with bars of iron and rods of copper.

"This is Sarvik's abode, where he lives with his wife, and rests and refreshes himself, and sleeps on soft pillows, when he is tired with long journeys and knocking about. Then the old woman heats the bath for him, and whisks his back and shoulders with the bath-whisk.[1]

"Sometimes he makes a great feast for his friends and relatives, when they shout and drink beer till they are tipsy. His brother-in-law is

[1] These bath-whisks, which are dried birch-twigs with the leaves left on, are often alluded to in the *Kalevala*.

Tühi,[1] his mother is the bitch of Põrgu, and his grandmother is the white mare."[2]

"We expect him back this evening from the upper world, for he does not like to stay where the sun shines by day and the moon and stars by night. But when he has anything to do in the under world, he stays away from home for days and weeks together."

The third sister added, "Noble scion of the Kalevides, if Sarvik found you among us here unawares, it would surely be your death, for no one who passes the threshold of his abode ever sees the sun again. We, poor creatures, were carried away as children from a country a thousand versts distant, and have had to do the hardest work early and late. But Taara mercifully decreed that we should always retain our youth as long as we retained our innocence."

"But what avails it," interrupted the eldest sister, "when we are cut off from all pleasure and happiness?"

[1] Or Tühja. See *ante*, p. 84.

[2] Compare Canto 10 of the *Kalevipoeg*, and the story of the Grateful Prince, as well as *ante*, p. 58 note). Sarvik seems to have belonged to the same family as the water-demon who was tricked by the Alevide in Canto 10.

Then the son of Kalev soothed and comforted them, assuring them that he was strong enough to rescue them. He would fight Sarvik himself, and overcome the old woman too. The eldest sister answered that if he really wished to fight with Sarvik, he must make use of the rod and the hat; for strength and bravery would avail nothing against Sarvik, who had thousands of allies at his beck and call, and was lord of the winds and of all kinds of magic spells.

But the Kalevide only laughed, and declared that he had fought with a whole host of demons in Finland. Then the second sister implored him to escape while there was yet time, and to wish himself away with the wishing-hat; for as soon as Sarvik returned, all the doors would fly back to their places behind him, and escape would become impossible. The hero laughed again, proud of his strength, and the sisters, greatly distressed, consulted how they could help him in spite of himself, by some artifice.

Two glasses stood by Sarvik's bed, half filled with a magic liquor that looked like beer. They looked just alike, but the liquor on the right hand gave the strength of ten oxen, while that on the

left produced corresponding weakness. The eldest sister hastened to change these glasses, while the second secured the wishing-rod.

As they returned, they heard the heavy footsteps of Sarvik approaching, and the youngest sister again implored the hero to fly before it was too late. Sarvik approached with a noise like hundreds of cavalry prancing over a bridge, or heavy iron waggons thundering along a copper roadway. The earth quaked and the cavern shook under his steps, but the hero stood at the entrance:

> Like the oak-tree in the tempest,
> Or the red glow 'mid the cloudlets,
> Or the rock amid a hailstorm,
> Or a tower in windy weather.

Presently Sarvik dashed open the last door with a blow of his fist, and stopped, confronting the intruder. The sisters shrank back pale and trembling, but the Kalevide stood beside them, with the hat in his hand, and apparently no taller than themselves. Sarvik asked who he was, and how he came to throw himself into the trap; but the hero at once challenged him to wrestle, and he accepted the challenge. Then Sarvik advanced to the bed, not knowing that the glasses had been

changed, and drained the water of weakness to the very bottom. Meantime the Kalevide concealed the magic hat in his bosom, so that he could at once resume his former strength and stature in case of need.

The combatants then went to the enclosure to wrestle, but Sarvik sent the eldest sister to the iron room to fetch a double chain with which the victor might bind his conquered foe. Meantime the wrestling-place was marked off with posts, so that all might be fair.

Now they rushed upon each other, and struggled together like waves in a tempest or roofs in a storm. The whole underground kingdom trembled, the palace walls cracked and their foundations heaved, the arches bowed and the roof began to totter. The contest remained long undecided, but when they paused to rest, the Kalevide drew out the hat, and wished to resume his former size and strength. He grew up at once, as strong as an oak-tree and as tall as a pine. He grasped Sarvik by the hair, raised him up ten fathoms, and then rammed him into the ground like a pointed stake, first to the calves, then to the knees, and then to the loins, so that he could not move. He then grasped the chain

to bind him, but suddenly Sarvik grew smaller and smaller, and finally sank into the ground out of sight, like a stone in a swamp.

The Kalevide shouted after him, upbraiding him for a coward, and threatened to follow him up and fetter him some other day; but his present care was to release the sisters from their long captivity. So he seized and girded on the sword, took a load of old treasures, and many bags full of gold coins, and barrels full of silver money. All this he took on his shoulders and mounted the three sisters on the top. Then he put on the hat, and cried out, "Hat, carry us quickly to the entrance gate, where I left the planks." He found himself there at once, but the cooks and the kettle had disappeared, and nothing was left behind but the ashes of the fire, in which a few dying embers still remained. These the hero fanned into a flame, into which he contemptuously tossed the hat, which was immediately consumed.

The sisters began to cry, and reproached him with having destroyed a hat which had not its equal on earth or in Põrgu, and said that all hope was now at an end. But the hero comforted them, telling them that it was no time for lamentation, for

the summer was at its loveliest, and they should soon find themselves in full possession of all the pleasures of life, from which they had been so long debarred. So he took the planks on his back, piled all his booty upon them, and then invited the sisters to take their place again on the top of all. Before their departure, the sisters had also provided themselves with good store of rich clothing from the silk and satin chambers, while the youngest had secured the wishing-rod in case of need.

Notwithstanding his load, the Kalevide ran on as if his feet were burning, while the sisters jested and laughed and sang.

CANTO XV

THE MARRIAGE OF THE SISTERS

THE Kalevide had not gone far on his homeward journey when he found that Tühi himself was pursuing him with a band of his followers. Then the youngest sister took the wishing-rod, and called upon it to flood the whole country, a bridge rising before them for the hero, while water flowed behind between him and his enemies. The demons stopped in confusion, and Tühi shouted to the Kalevide to ask if he was carrying off his adopted daughters? "It looks like it," answered the hero.[1] Then Tühi asked again, "Dear brother, did you wrestle with my good brother-in-law in his own enclosure, and then drive him into the ground like a post?" "Likely enough," retorted the hero; "but it's not my fault if his bones are

[1] Compare the similar scene in the story of "Slyboots," later in this volume.

still sound." Then the demon asked again, "My dear brother, son of Kalev, did you lock up our old mother in the kitchen just like a mouse in a trap, while she was baking cakes?" "O yes," said the hero; "and I suppose she roared, and made up a bed among the boxes of peas, and for aught I know she may be sleeping there still, unless a flea has woke her up." "Have you stolen Sarvik's good sword?" asked Tühi again. "Perhaps I may have taken the weapon too, dear brother," answered the hero. "Who can separate a man and his sword? One is worth nothing without the other." Then Tühi asked if he had taken the hat. "I think so," said the hero; "but Sarvik will never put it on his head again, for I threw it into the fire and burned it to ashes, which have blown away in the wind." Tühi then asked if he had plundered his brother's treasures. "Yes, my dear sir," answered the hero; "I took a little gold and silver, but not much. Ten horses could drag such a load, and twenty oxen easily; but you may depend upon it I didn't carry away any copper." Tühi's next question was whether he had stolen the bridge-builder, the wishing-rod. The hero replied, "I

suppose some brown-eyed maiden stole it, for no stronger person would have troubled about such a thing." Tühi next inquired how he had treated the maidens; and to this the hero replied that he'd tell him another time. "Won't you come back again, dear brother, and pay your debts?" asked Tühi at last. "Who knows, dear brother?" said the hero; "if I ever find myself short of money, I may perchance come back to fetch some more gold and silver, and repay my old debts with new ones." And upon this Tühi and his seventy people decamped in the greatest haste, as if they had been on fire, or as if they were pursued by gadflies.

Strong as was the Kalevide, his back was weary and chafed with his heavy load, and he threw it off and lay down to rest; but while he slept he was in danger of being carried away by a sudden flood from the mountains, raised against him by a sorceress.[1] After stemming it with some trouble, on resuming his journey, he met a stranger who

[1] This incident resembles an adventure attributed to Thor. In the legends of all countries, sorcerers or fugitives are represented as raising magic floods, either to sweep away their enemies or to baffle pursuit. There are three instances in this very canto.

asked him what he was going to do with the planks. The stranger proved to be the son of Olev, the great master-builder, and to him was intrusted the task of building the cities and fortifications.

When the Kalevide learned that he had lost seven weeks in a magic sleep, he gave the three sisters to the charge of the son of Alev, who married the youngest. The son of Sulev married the eldest, but the second sister found no lover, and while the others were talking together of their wedded happiness she stole apart weeping; and at length she was carried away by a famous sorcerer, and her strong brothers-in-law went in search of her. On the third evening they came upon her track, when the sorcerer spread out a great lake to impede their passage. But the Alevide had brought with him the wishing-rod, which quickly provided them with a bridge. They rushed across, broke the locks, and burst open the doors, slew the sorcerer, released the captive, and then sent the red cock on the roof.[1]

[1] This is the usual Esthonian euphemism for setting a house on fire. I understand that there is also some connection between red cocks and fire in Scottish folk-lore; and in Scandinavian mythology two of the three cocks which are to crow before Ragnarök are red. May they not have some connection with the fire of Surtur?

Then the son of Olev took the second sister to wife; and thus all the three sisters whom the Kalevide had released from the regions of Sarvik were happily married, and many great tribes derived their origin from them.

CANTO XVI

THE VOYAGE OF THE KALEVIDE

THE Kalevide now decided on a journey north, to the uttermost end of the world, where it touches the sky. He imagined that he could only reach this point by sea, and thought at first of travelling on the wings of an eagle. Meantime, a raven directed him, when he came to a broad expanse of blue water, to look for a place where rushes grew on the bank, and to stamp on the ground with his right foot, when the mouth of the earth and the strongly guarded doors would fly open, and he would reach the end of the world.

Then the Kalevide reflected how he had waded through every lake and sea, and had found none too deep for him except Lake Ilma. He then thought he would visit Finland, Norway, and the islands, where he expected to find old friends to direct him on his journey. So he directed Olev

to fell the great oak-tree which their father and mother had planted, and which neither sun, moon, stars, nor rain, could penetrate,[1] and to make the strongest sailing vessels for exploring voyages from the trunk, warships from the crown, merchantmen from the large branches, slave-ships from the smaller ones, children's boats from the splinters, and maiden's boats from the chips. He ordered the remainder to be used for building towns, fortresses, and houses for the people in various parts of the country.

Olev replied, "I know what to do, dear brother, if we can find a strong man in the country able to fell the oak-tree." The raven told them to send out to seek for such a man, and they did so; whereupon the wise men of Norway and Finland assembled to give them advice. But they told the Kalevide that it was no use building a wooden ship to sail to the world's end, for the spirits of the Northern Lights would set it in flames. He must build a strong vessel of iron and copper and tin.

The Kalevide then constructed a vessel, not of

[1] Here we have the great oak-tree mentioned in Cantos 5 and 6 reappearing in another connection.

iron and copper, but of silver. The whole of the ship—planking, deck, masts, and chains—was of silver, and he named the vessel Lennuk.[1] For himself he provided golden armour, silver for the nobles, iron for the crew, copper for the old men, and steel for the wise men.

The Kalevide selected experienced sailors and many wise men to accompany him, and they set sail joyfully towards Finland; but soon turned, and directed their course to the far north, in the direction of the Great Bear.

To the north they sailed under the guidance of a wise helmsman who knew all languages and the speech of birds and beasts. But the Finnish sorcerers raised storms against the ship, and they were driven along for seven days and nights, till a coast rose before them which the helmsman declared was quite unknown to him. The son of Kalev then sprang into the sea, swam ashore, and towed the ship after him.[2] The birds sang to them that it was the poverty-stricken coast of Lapland.[3] They went

[1] The Flyer.

[2] In the present canto the Kalevide is never spoken of as of gigantic size, unless we may consider feats like this as implying it.

[3] Baring Gould considers this country to be the North Cape, but the geography of the voyage is confused.

to explore the country, but wandered a long way without meeting with any inhabitants. At last they found a solitary cottage, where a maiden sat on the grass plot before the door spinning. And she sang how a milkmaid once found a cock and a hen. The cock flew away, but she caught the hen, and brought it home, where it grew up into a proud princess who had many lovers, among whom were the sun and—"The Kalevide," shouted he; and the maiden screamed and fled into the house. Then her father came to the door, and the Kalevide saluted him courteously, and asked him the way to the world's end. The wise man answered that it was a vain quest. The sea had no end, and those who had formerly attempted this quest had found their deaths on the Fire Island. The raven had only directed them on the road to Pōrgu, but if they wished to return home, he would be pleased to guide them.

The Kalevide answered that he needed no pilot to show him the way home, but would be glad if the Lapp could pilot him to the door at the World's End. The Lapp consented, but bargained for what was chained to the wall at home, which the hero readily promised.

So Varrak the Laplander took the helm and

steered the vessel due north for many days and nights. The first danger they encountered was a great whirlpool,[1] which threatened to engulf the ship. Then Varrak threw a small barrel overboard, wrapped in red cloths and ornamented with red streamers. This bait was swallowed by a whale, which took to flight, and towed the ship to a place of safety.

Again they sailed on for a long distance, till they came in sight of the Island of Fire,[2] where huge pillars of flame were towering up, and vast clouds of smoke filled the air. The Kalevide wished to visit the island, but Varrak warned him of the danger, and at length the Sulevide volunteered to land alone. So Varrak ran the ship ashore at a spot where one mountain was casting up flames, a second smoke, and a third boiling water, while the burning lava ran down into the valley.

The son of Sulev wandered on amid ashes and snowfields, amid a rain of red-hot stones, till he

[1] The Maelström?

[2] The commentators identify this island with Iceland, but the voyagers were apparently on the wrong side of Scandinavia to reach either the Maelström or Iceland. Still we have both geysers and volcanoes in the text.

reached the mouth of the volcano, when his coat caught fire and his hair and eyebrows were singed, and he returned scorched to the ship. The Kalevide asked if he had seen anything of the cupbearer, who had followed him; but he had not. Then a white bird perched on the ship, and the wise Finn, who knew the language of animals, asked for tidings of the boy. But the bird answered that he had wandered away to a beautiful country which lay behind the snow-mountains, where he was enjoying himself in the company of the water-nymphs. He would return no more; let the ship proceed on her course.[1]

Next they reached a country where the birds all fed on gold and silver and copper, and where the herbage grew as high as the pine-trees. The Kalevide sent some of the crew ashore, under the guidance of the magician, to view the country, while he and the Sulevide lay down on deck to sleep in the sun, leaving the Alevide to keep watch.

The ship's company, headed by the magician, wandered into the country, and, when night came, lay down to rest under a bush. Next morning the

[1] Here the Kalevide's sun begins to decline, for the first of his faithful companions leaves his side, as Hylas left Heracles.

little daughter of a giant[1] found them asleep, and wondering what they were, put them all into her apron, and carried them home to her father, and scattered them before him, saying:

"Look at these, O dearest father,
I have brought them here to play with,
For I found them in the cabbage,
Where the six like fleas were lying,
Stiffened in the chilly dewdrops,
Sleeping 'neath a head of cabbage."

The giant[2] wished to test the wisdom of the strangers, so he inquired, "What walks along the grass, steps on the edge of the fence, and walks along the sides of the reeds?" "The bee," replied the magician.[3] "What drinks from the brooks and wells, and from the stones on the bank?" "The rainbow." "What comes hissing from the

[1] This is Chamisso's Alsatian legend, "Das Riesenspielzeug," "The Giant's Toy," usually called in English translations "The Giant's Daughter and the Peasant." The girl in the poem seems to have far exceeded even the Kalevide in stature; and we may remember Gulliver's remark respecting the Brobdingnagians—"Who knows but that even this prodigious race of mortals might be equally overmatched in some distant part of the world whereof we have yet no discovery?"

[2] Throughout this passage the giant is usually called simply the magician, and the other "the wise man."

[3] Asking riddles of this kind was a common amusement in Northern Europe. Compare Prior's *Danish Ballads*, i. 185, 334.

meadow, and rushing from the blue forest?" "The rain." The giant was pleased with the answers to his riddles, and told his daughter to carry the men back to where she had found them, but the wise man asked her to take them to the ship for fun. The maiden willingly obeyed; she leaned over the ship like a vast cloud, shook the men out of her apron on deck, and then blew the ship four miles out to sea, for which the Kalevide shouted back his thanks to her.

Now they sailed farther north, and the cold became intense, while the spirits of the Northern Lights began their combats in the air with silver spears and golden shields. The sailors were frightened, but the Kalevide was pleased that they should now be able to direct their course when they had left the sun and moon behind them.

Next they reached an unknown shore, where the inhabitants were half men and half dogs, and had long dog's tails.[1] They were armed with great clubs, and the Kalevide sprang ashore to fight. A

[1] Baring-Gould ingeniously suggests that this country is Greenland, and that the Dog-men are Esquimaux, clad in furs, and riding in dog-sledges. The end of this canto is inconsequential, for the hero should have reached his goal during this voyage, not by a land-journey afterwards.

horse which he mounted soon fell dead under him, but he tore up an oak by the roots and began to lay the country waste. The wisest man of the country expostulated with him, and he repented of his violence, and prayed to Ukko to send fish to the country to replace the good ground which he had destroyed in his fury. Peace was thus concluded; and the wise man told the Kalevide that the raven had sent him on an idle quest to the gates of Pōrgu. The Kalevide then decided to return home, and they directed the ship towards Lalli in the bay of Lindanisa, where Olev was building a city.

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CANTO XVII

THE HEROES AND THE DWARF

OLEV had now built a magnificent city, fortified with towers and ditches, around the burial-mound of Kalev. Large numbers of people flocked to it, and the Kalevide named it Lindanisa, in memory of his mother.[1] Other fortified cities were founded by the Alevide and the Sulevide.

But news came that hostile troops were landing on the coast, and the Kalevide mounted his war-horse. The king wore a golden helmet, gold spurs, and a silver belt, and carried a shield of gold, and the steed was all caparisoned with gold and silver and pearls, while the maidens of the country looked on with admiration.

The Kalevide and his three friends fought a pitched battle with the countless forces of the enemy on the plains of Esthonia. Their heads

[1] Linda's bosom, now Revel.

fell before him like autumn leaves, and their scattered limbs were strewn about in heaps like straw or rushes. His horse waded in blood and bones to the belly; for the Kalevide slaughtered his enemies by tens of thousands, and would have utterly annihilated them, but, as he was pursuing the fugitives over hill and dale, his horse lost his footing in a bog, and was engulfed in the morass.

As the Kalevide was unable to continue the pursuit after the loss of his horse, he recalled his troops and divided the booty. Then he sent his soldiers to carry news of the victory to the towns and villages throughout the country, and he and his three friends set out on a journey across the plains and swamps, and through primeval forests, making a pathway for others as they advanced. At length they came to a place where smoke and flames were shooting up into the air, and when they reached the spot they found an old woman sitting at the mouth of a cave and stirring the fire under a pot. The Alevide asked what she was cooking, and she answered, "Cabbage for my sons and for myself." Then the son of Sulev said they were hungry travellers, and asked her to give them some, and to take a rest while they

finished the cookery. The old woman consented, but warned them, if a strange youth asked to be allowed to taste the broth, to take good care that he did not empty the pot and leave them nothing. Three of the heroes at once volunteered to take turns to watch the pot, but the Kalevide said nothing. Then the old woman crept into the bushes, and hid herself in a wolf's den.

The Alevide took the first watch, and his companions lay down by the fire to sleep. He had not been long sitting there, and throwing fresh faggots on the fire, when one of the little dwarf race stole up stealthily and timidly through the long grass. He was about three spans high, and had a gold bell[1] hanging to his neck. He had small horns behind the ears, and a goat's beard under his chin. He asked humbly to be allowed to taste the soup, and the hero gave him leave, but warned him to take care not to drown himself in it.

The dwarf replied that he would like to taste the soup without a spoon, and jumped on the edge of the pot; but he grew up in an instant to

[1] The bells of the dwarfs are often of great importance in Northern fairy mythology.

the height of a pine-tree, and then to the clouds, rising to the height of seventy fathoms and more. Then he vanished like a mist, and the Alevide found the pot as empty as if the contents had been scraped out.[1] So he refilled the pot with water, put in some fresh cabbage, and roused the Olevide, but said nothing of what had happened. Then he lay down and went to sleep, leaving his companion on guard. But presently the dwarf reappeared, and neither the Olevide nor the Sulevide, who took the third watch, fared any better than their companion.

The watch now fell to the Kalevide, but he would not allow the dwarf to taste the soup until he gave him his gold bell as a pledge of good faith. As soon as he had received it, he playfully gave the dwarf a fillip on the forehead, when there was a tremendous crash of thunder, and the dwarf sank into the earth and disappeared from the sight of the hero. The other heroes and the old woman then assembled round the fire to hear what had happened. They sat down to their supper, after which the Kalevide advised his companions to lie down and rest for

[1] This incident is common in Esthonian tales.

the remainder of the night, and to return home to their wives and children in the morning. During the night the daughters of the Meadow Queen danced and sported, and sang to the Kalevide of his approaching adventures and journey.

CANTO XVIII

THE KALEVIDE'S JOURNEY TO PŌRGU

NEXT morning the Kalevide rose at daybreak and looked about him. Where the dwarf had vanished in blue smoke, he now beheld a sheet of blue water with rushes on the bank, and knew that he had unexpectedly chanced upon the entrance to Pōrgu. His wearied comrades were still sleeping, and, without disturbing them, he stamped with his right foot, and the hidden strongly-guarded doors of Hades flew open.

The hero gazed down into the abyss, but clouds of smoke and hot steam rolled up, and made his eyes smart, and he hesitated a moment, when a raven called to him from the summit of a pine-tree to sound the bell. Instantly the clouds of smoke disappeared, and he set out on the downward path. As he proceeded, he found himself in thick darkness, without a ray of light to guide him, and he

was forced to grope his way, when the voice of a mouse directed him to sound the bell again. The path grew dimly light, and the Kalevide proceeded, but soon found his way so much impeded by nets and snares, which multiplied faster than he could destroy them, that he was unable to advance, and his strength began to fail him. This time it was a toad who advised him to sound the bell, when all the magic snares vanished, and he hurried on till he reached the edge of a rivulet about two spans broad. Every time he attempted to cross, his foot sank in the mud in the middle, and no matter how often he renewed his efforts, he could not reach the opposite shore. While the Kalevide was lamenting that he found less difficulty in crossing Lake Peipus with a heavy load of timber on his back, he heard a crayfish advising him to sound the bell, when the brook instantly vanished.

There was nothing in these caverns to mark the difference between night and day, and the Kalevide did not know how long he had been struggling against the various difficulties of the road. He was now assailed by swarms of mosquitoes, which he thought to escape by hurrying through them and leaving them behind; but they grew

thicker and thicker, till a cricket in the grass called to him to sound the bell. The mosquitoes vanished as if carried away by the wind, and the hero sat down to rest and refresh himself, and having at length learned wisdom from experience, tied the bell on his little finger, that he might have its constant aid in future. Then he advanced farther.

And now the hosts of hell, the servants of Sarvik, heard his heavy tread, and they sent out scouts, who fled back in consternation, reporting that the son of Kalev, the strongest of men, was advancing with hostile intentions. Then Sarvik commanded his forces to march against him.

The Kalevide had now reached a river of blazing pitch, crossed by an iron bridge. Here the hosts of hell determined to make a stand, and formed themselves into four detachments, one upon the bridge, one below, one on the bank, and one in the rear.

"What's this swarm of frogs?" cried the Kalevide, drawing his sword and rushing forward to the bridge. He was at once assailed with a shower of arrows, and was then attacked with spear and battleaxe; but he stood like a wall of

iron, and scattered his enemies, though fresh hosts continually advanced against him. At length he fought his way through all the hostile troops, and Sarvik was in despair, and did his utmost to block the paths and to fortify himself against the imminent danger.

When the Kalevide reached the bridge, he rested for a moment to look round, and then casting the bodies of his enemies into the river as he advanced, his steps thundered across the bridge, and he soon reached the fortifications. Three strokes of his fist sufficed to burst in the gates, and he trod down all impediments and forced his way into the enclosure. When he came to the inner door, he beat and kicked it down, and it fell in fragments, door, door-posts, bolts, and bars, all battered to pieces. In the hall he found a shade resembling his mother Linda spinning. At her right hand was a cup of the water of strength, and at her left a cup of the water of weakness. Without speaking, she offered her son the cup with the water of strength, which he drank, and then lifting a huge rock broke his way into the inner hall, where Sarvik's old mother was sitting spinning. She knew, and tried to beg the bell,

but the Kalevide put her off, and inquired if Sarvik was at home. She answered that he left home the day before yesterday, and would not return for two or three days; but if the hero liked to wait for him, he should be received as a guest; but first he must taste her mead. He knew that she would give him the water of weakness, and declined, but looked about till he saw a secret door in a recess in the wall, and was about to break it open, when it flew open of itself with a tremendous noise, and a host of armed warriors rushed out. He repulsed them all, and then Sarvik himself cried out to him, reproaching him with all the wrongs he had suffered at his hands, and the numerous thefts he had committed. In reply the Kalevide reproached Sarvik with his own tricks; but nevertheless he sheathed his sword and put the bell in his pocket.

Then Sarvik came forth from his hiding-place pale and trembling, and wishing to recover himself a little by a potion, mistook the cups in his confusion, and drank the water of weakness, while the Kalevide took another draught of the water of strength.

CANTO XIX

THE LAST FEAST OF THE HEROES

AFTER this the Kalevide and Sarvik engaged in a terrific wrestling-match, which lasted for seven days and nights, with varying success. At length the shade of Linda, who was looking on, took her distaff, swung it ten times round her head, and dashed it to the ground. The hint was not lost on her son. He seized Sarvik by the garters, whirled him ten times round, and then hurled him down, set his knee on his chest, and seized his throat and tried to strangle him. Then he took his belt, bound Sarvik firmly, and dragged him to the iron chamber, where he bound him hand and foot with chains. A third chain he fastened round his neck, and a fourth round his body, and drove the ends into the walls of rock. He rolled a great stone, as large as a house, against the door, and fixed the chains to this also, so that Sarvik could hardly move.

The Kalevide washed the traces of the struggle away, and Sarvik tried to obtain some concessions from him, but failing this he began to curse and swear. The Kalevide then went to pack up a store of treasures, but was warned by a mouse not to overload himself. So he contented himself with taking two sacks on each shoulder, and then set out on his homeward journey, and the iron bridge thundered beneath his footsteps, while Sarvik shouted curses after him.

At last the Kalevide struggled up to daylight, and sank down exhausted by the side of the son of Alev, who had been waiting anxiously for his friend, and had heard faint sounds of conflict far below. When his friend had fetched him some water, and he had recovered a little from his fatigue, he asked how long he had been absent, and learned that he had been away about three weeks. The Kalevide remarked that where he had been there was no means of distinguishing day and night or measuring time, and he then related his adventures.

The Alevide then slaughtered a great ox, a feat which no one else had been able to accomplish. The blood filled a hundred vats and the flesh a thousand barrels. They sat down to supper, and

the Kalevide ate till he was ready to burst, and then laid down to sleep, while the son of Alev seated himself on the treasure-sacks. The Kalevide slept for two days and nights, and did not wake till the third morning was well advanced. While he slept, his snoring resounded for miles, and the great trees shook as if they were saplings. About noon on the third day they set out homeward. The son of Alev carried one sack of treasure, and the Kalevide the other three.

After the Kalevide's return from his journey, he resided at Lindanisa, occupying himself with schemes for the good of his people. Olev had built three more cities, in the north, west, and south of the country. His friends advised the Kalevide to seek a bride in Kungla, and he replied that they would first build a beautiful fortified city and rear a magnificent house, and then he would follow their advice.

One day the Kalevide sat at a feast with his friends, and a harper sang the adventures of Siuru, the blue bird,[1] the daughter of Taara.

The Kalevide invited his friends to drink, and sang a song relating how he had gone down to

[1] This song will be included in a later section of the book.

the beach where two trees, the apple of fortune and the oak of wisdom, grew in the sea. Here he found some girls who told him that his little brother had fallen into the water. He waded into the water to look for him, and saw a naked sword at the bottom, which he was just about to grasp, when his sister called from the shore to tell him that his father, mother, brothers, and sisters were all dead or dying. He hurried home, but it proved to be a hoax, for they were all alive and well.

The son of Sulev next sang a ditty relating an adventure with four coy maidens, and the drinking and mirth continued.

And now messengers arrived in great haste, announcing that hostile armies of Letts, Vends, and Poles had invaded the kingdom on all sides. But the Kalevide bade his comrades empty their cups, while he himself quietly gave general orders, and declared that to-morrow he would take the field in person. Then he sang a song about two lovers.

While the Kalevide was thus drinking and singing, Varrak the Laplander entered and embraced his knees. He called down blessings from Ukko on

the hero, and then requested to receive the reward which had been promised him, as he intended to set sail for home on the morrow. The Kalevide asked him what he wished for; and he answered that he had found a chained book in an iron cover, which he wished to possess.

The Kalevide could not read the book, which nevertheless contained all the priceless wisdom which his father had recorded; and he willingly gave it to Varrak, notwithstanding the loud protests of the sons of Sulev and Olev. The book was fastened with three chains and three locks, and the keys could not be found. Varrak knew very well where they were, but he kept his knowledge to himself. So the Kalevide ordered the wall to be broken down to release the book, which was then laid on a waggon, and dragged by a yoke of oxen to the boat, which Varrak had already loaded with bags of gold.[1]

Meantime a troop of fugitives came flying to the city, bringing word that the war was close at hand,

[1] Some of the commentators regard this book as a palladium on which the independence of Esthonia depended; and the thoughtlessness of the Kalevide in parting with the book which contained the wisdom of his father as a sacrilegious action which precipitated his ruin.

and that the axes of the youths were useless against the swords of the mail-clad warriors.[1] The Kalevide ordered the weary men to be fed and comfortably housed, and while they slept he repaired to his father's grave. But there was no voice nor counsel; there was no sound but the sighing of the wind and the moaning of the distant sea, and the clouds shed sad tears. The hero returned home sorrowful and uneasy.

[1] These are identified by the commentators with the Teutonic Knights of the Sword, who conquered Esthonia in the eleventh century.

CANTO XX

ARMAGEDDON

THE news of the invasion had brought the feast to a sudden end, and the Kalevide consulted with his friends, and proposed to bury his treasure, thinking it might otherwise be insecure. So at dead of night the Kalevide, Alevide, and Sulevide dug a deep pit in a secret place. Then the Kalevide solemnly delivered over the treasure to Taara's protection, and declared that no one should obtain it but the son of a pure mother, who should come to the spot on St. John's Eve, and should sacrifice three black animals without a white hair upon them—a black cock with a curled comb, a black dog or cat, and a mole. Then he murmured secret spells over the treasure; but the man is not yet born who shall raise it.

When the morning dawned, the son of Kalev took his spear and sword, mounted his war-horse, and

ordered the Alevide to follow him as his shield-bearer. Then he blew his horn, and set his forces in battle array. The sound of the horn echoed through city and forest, and was heard in every province of Esthonia,[1] and the people flocked to the king at the summons. The women wept and lamented, but their husbands, sons, brothers, and lovers went forth to the war. The Kalevide assembled his army in the sacred oak-forest of Taara, and a bird advised him to sharpen his sword and spear before the fight. By the fifth evening the last stragglers had come in, and the Kalevide allowed his men two days' longer rest. On the third day thereafter the battle began in earnest, and the Kalevide fought against the mailed warriors for half a day, when his horse was killed under him.

Hundreds were slain on both sides, and at last the Sulevide fell severely wounded. The sooth-sayer was summoned hastily, and adjured the blood to cease flowing:[2]

> Quickly came the man of wisdom,
> Who should charm the blood from flowing
> And should still the pain by magic.

[1] Here we have a reminiscence of the Giallar horn of Heimdall, and of the horn of Roland (or Orlando).

[2] Compare the much longer story in the 9th Runo of the *Kalevala*.

"Flow thou not, O blood, like water;
Still thee, blood, of life the honey;
Wherefore thus thy source o'erflowing,
Breaking thus the bonds that hold thee?
Let the blood as stone be hardened,
Firm as oak-tree let it stiffen;
In the stone-like veins around it,
Let the blood be stanched, O Taara!"

But the blood continued to flow, and then the magician used stronger spells, pressed his fingers on the wound to stop the bleeding, and tied up the limb with red thread, afterwards applying healing herbs.

Meantime the Kalevide had routed the enemy and dispersed them over the plain in flight, the dead being piled up in heaps behind them. But the hero was weary and overcome with heat and thirst, and went to a lake, which he drained to the last drop, leaving only the mud at the bottom.

Three days were given to the burial of the dead and the care of the wounded, and then the Kalevide set out in pursuit of the enemy. Olev built a bridge over the Võhanda according to the Kalevide's directions, and presently the army fell in with a murderous host of Tartars, Poles, and Letts, who were ravaging the neighbourhood of Pleskau.

Another great battle was fought, and the Kale-

vide slaughtered his enemies till their bodies lay in heaps a fathom high about the field, and the blood was five spans deep. The battle lasted for seven days, and many notable chiefs were slain, among whom was the son of Sulev, who had been so severely wounded in a previous battle. The Tartars and Poles had now been slain or put to flight, and the Kalevide gathered together the remnants of his army to attack the Vends, and ordered the Alevide to break their centre.

The fight with the Vends lasted two days longer, and again vast numbers were slain on both sides. A great mound was raised on the battlefield over the grave of the Sulevide in memory of the fallen hero. The three remaining heroes, the Kalevide, the Alevide, and Olev, stood like towers against the attacks of the mailed warriors; but at last they were overcome by thirst, and went to a lake in a valley, with steep high banks, to drink. The Alevide, who was very weary, stooped down to drink, when his foot slipped, and he fell into the water, and was drowned before his friends could recover his body. In the bright sunshine his huge iron helmet and his three-edged sword may still be seen gleaming at the bottom of the water.

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The Kalevide was so overcome with grief at this last misfortune that he abandoned his kingdom, abdicating in favour of Olev, and retired to the pine-forests on the banks of the river Koiva, where he built a cottage and thought to dwell in peace and retirement. Here he lived alone, supporting himself on fish and crayfish. One day a party of armed men found their way to his hermitage, and invited him to join company with them. He turned his back on them contemptuously, when he saw in the water the reflection of one of them advancing with his sword drawn to murder him.[1] He turned angrily on his foes with an indignant exclamation, and seizing one of them by the helmet, whirled him round, and the air sounded as if disturbed by the rush of the Northern eagle. Then he dashed him down so that he sank to his waist in the ground. He seized the second by the hand, and swung him round till the forest was shaken as if by a tempest, and him he sank to the cheeks in the ground. The third he seized in the same way, and drove him so far into the ground that nothing could

[1] A similar adventure happened to the naturalist Macgillivray in the Solomon Islands during the voyage of the *Herald*. He turned round and shot the savage dead.

be seen of him but the hole where he had disappeared.

Another time the Kalevide was troubled by a messenger sent by the merchants on the coast to invite him to visit them. After listening to his talk for some time, he told him to pull up the rod which he had baited for crayfish, and after he had eaten, they might discuss the matter further. The youth went down to the river bank, and found, to his amazement, that the rod was a tall fir-tree, which the Kalevide had torn up by the roots, but which the youth could not even move. Then the Kalevide lifted the rod with one hand, and showed the youth that it was baited with the whole carcass of a dead mare; and sent him about his business, telling him to report what he had seen.

These intrusions vexed the Kalevide, and he wandered away from his hermitage through the forests, and three days afterwards he reached Lake Peipus, without remembering that he had ever travelled the same way before. Singing gaily, he came to the brook Käpä, and waded in. The hero had laid an injunction on his lost sword which he had intended to apply to the sorcerer who had robbed him of it; but the understanding

of the sword was confused by the curse which the Finnish smith had previously laid upon it, and it reflected that now was the time for vengeance. So without more ado the great sword raised itself, and cut off both the hero's legs at the knee. He cried out for help, and dragged himself with his hands to the shore, where he lay down bleeding, his legless body covering a whole acre of ground.

The cries of the dying Kalevide rose above the clouds and ascended to heaven. The heavenly powers assembled round the hero, and vainly tried to salve his wounds and soothe his pain. Presently he expired, and his soul, like a joyful bird, took its flight to the halls of Taara in heaven. There he sat in the firelight among the heroes of Taara, resting his cheek on his hand, and listening to the bards as they sang of his great deeds.

But the old father of the gods knew that so great a hero, who had conquered all his enemies in battle, and had bound even the prince of Põrgu in chains, could not remain idle in heaven. So he summoned all the gods in secret conclave to consider what work they should assign to the Kalevide, and the debate lasted for many days and nights. At last they determined that he

should keep watch and ward at the gates of Pōrgu, so that Sarvik should never be able to free himself from his bonds.

So the soul of the Kalevide flew down from heaven like a bird, and was bidden to reanimate his body; but the might of all the gods, and even the divine wisdom of Taara, could not put his legs on again. Then they mounted him on a white charger,[1] and sent him to the post which had been assigned to him at the gates of Pōrgu.

When the Kalevide reached the rocky portal, a voice was heard from heaven, "Strike the rock with thy fist!" He did so, and clove open the rock, and his right hand was caught in the cleft.

[1] There is a curious variant relating how the Kalevide waded across Lake Peipus with a bridle in his hand to look for a horse, and the water threatened to rise above his boots, when he said, "Don't think to drown this man." Then the devil brought him first his daughter and then his son in the shape of horses; but they both broke down under him. Then the devil brought him his mother, in her usual shape of a white mare, and she galloped away with the hero, and he could not rein her in. Then a voice from heaven cried, "Godson, godson, strike your hand into the oak!" The hero seized a great oak-tree as they were passing, when it came away in his hand, roots and all. Then the mare rushed to Pōrgu, and the voice again bade the hero strike his hand into the doorpost. He did so, and his hand was caught fast, and the mare galloped away to hell from between his legs, and left him hanging there.

Here he sits now on his horse at the gates of Pōrgu, watching the bonds of others while bound himself. The demons attempt unceasingly to soften their chains by heaping up charcoal fagots around them, but when the cock crows at dawn their fetters grow thicker again. From time to time, too, the Kalevide struggles to free his hand from the wall of rock, till the earth trembles and the sea foams; but the hand of Mana[1] holds him, that the warder shall never depart from his post. But one day a vast fire will break out on both sides of the rock and melt it, when the Kalevide will withdraw his hand, and return to earth to inaugurate a new day of prosperity for the Esthonians.[2]

[1] The God of Death.

[2] The guardian hero of every nation is looked for to return in a similar manner; even William Tell.

END OF THE KALEVIPOEG.

PART II

Esthonian Folk-Tales

THESE are very numerous, and, while some are of course identical with well-known stories of world-wide distribution, others have a peculiarly original character of their own. We have divided them into sections, but this classification must not be taken as too stringent, for many tales would fall equally well under two or three of our separate headings. In so far as any foreign elements are visible, they are apparently Scandinavian or German. Finnish tales show more trace of Russian influence, but there is seldom any visible in Esthonian tales, and even in the *Kalevipoeg* there is no resemblance to the Russian hero-legends. It is, however, noteworthy that even in the most heathenish tales, the heroes usually have names of

Christian origin; though not in the *Kalevipoeg*. It is possible that the Gospel of Nicodemus, which describes the descent into hell, may have suggested the name of Nicodemus for Slyboots.

SECTION I

TALES ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE "KALEVIPOEG"

THE following stories are thoroughly Esthonian in character, and, with the exception of the first, mostly exhibit variants of the Kalevide's journeys to Pōrgu.

That of "Slyboots" is also interesting from the resemblance of a portion of it to "Jack and the Beanstalk."

THE MILKY WAY.

(JANNSEN.)

SOON after the creation of the world, God created a fair maiden and gave into her charge all the birds beneath the heavens. This was Lindu, the lovely daughter of Uko, who knew the paths of all the birds of passage, whence they came in spring, and whither they went in autumn, and appointed to each his dwelling. She cared for the birds with

a tender heart, like a mother for her children, and gave them her aid whenever it was possible; and like a flower in the morning sunlight under a thousand dewdrops, so brightly shone Lindu in her motherly care for the birds.

Therefore was it not surprising that all gazed upon her and loved her. Every one desired the maiden as a wife, and suitors came in crowds. The North Star drove up in a grand coach drawn by six brown horses, and brought ten presents. But Lindu gave him a sharp answer. "You must always remain at your post, and cannot stir from it," said she.

Then came the Moon in a silver coach drawn by ten brown horses, and he brought twenty presents. But Lindu refused the Moon too. "You are much too changeable," said she, "and yet you always run in your old path, and that won't suit me."

Scarcely had the Moon taken a sorrowful departure than the Sun drove up. He rode in a golden coach drawn by twenty gold-red horses, and brought thirty presents with him. But all his splendour and magnificence and rich presents went for nothing; for Lindu said, "I don't like you.

You always run on the same course day by day, just like the Moon."

At length the Northern Light came from midnight in a diamond coach drawn by a thousand white horses. His arrival was so splendid that Lindu went to the door to meet him. His attendants carried a whole coach-load of gold and silver, pearls, and jewellery into her house. And behold, the bridegroom and his presents pleased Lindu so much that she accepted him at once, saying, "You don't always travel the same path, like the others. You set out when you will, and rest when it pleases you. Each time you appear in new splendour and magnificence, and each time you don a new robe, and each time you ride in a new coach with new horses. You are the fitting bridegroom, whom one can receive with joy."

Now they celebrated their betrothal with great splendour. But the Sun, Moon, and Pole Star looked on sadly, and envied the happiness of the Northern Light.

The Northern Light could not tarry long in the bride's house, for he was obliged to journey back towards midnight. But before his departure he promised soon to return for the wedding, and to carry

the maiden to his home in the North. In the meantime she was to prepare her trousseau and get everything ready for the wedding.

Lindu now waited and made everything ready. One day followed another, but the bridegroom came not to hold a joyous wedding with his bride. The winter passed away, and the warm spring adorned the earth with new beauty, then came the summer; but Lindu waited in vain for her bridegroom; nothing was seen of him.

Then she began to lament bitterly, and sorrowed day and night. She sat in the meadow by the river in her bridal robes and white veil and the wreath on her head, and from her thousand tears sprang the little brooks in the valley. She did not heed the little birds who flew about her head and shoulders, and sought to soothe her with their soft blandishments, nor did she remember to direct their migrations to foreign parts, and to care for their nurture and food. So they wandered about and flew from place to place, not knowing what to do or where to remain.

At length the news of the maiden's distress and the needs of the birds came to the ears of Uko. Then he resolved in his heart to help them all,

and ordered the winds to carry his daughter to him, away from the misery of the world. While Lindu was sitting on the ground weeping and lamenting, the winds sank down before her, and lifted her so gently that she herself perceived it not, and bore her away to heaven, where they set her down on the blue firmament.

There dwells Lindu still in a heavenly pavilion. Her white bridal veil spreads from one end of the heavens to the other, and he who lifts his eyes to the Milky Way beholds the maiden in her bridal robes. From thence she still directs the birds on their long migrations; from thence she still gazes towards midnight at the other end of the heavens, and waves her hand in greeting to the Northern Light. There she has forgotten her sorrow, and her former happy life reawakens in her heart. And when winter approaches, she sees with joy that the Northern Light visits her as a guest, and asks after his bride. Often he rises up to her, and, heart to heart, renews the bond of their love. But they may not hold their wedding. Uko has stationed the maiden in the heavens with her bridal robe and veil, and the bridegroom cannot carry away his love from her seat. Thus has Uko in his

wisdom determined, and thus has the Milky Way arisen.

THE GRATEFUL PRINCE.

(KREUTZWALD.)

ONCE upon a time, the king of the Golden Land[1] lost his way in a forest, and, notwithstanding all his efforts, could not find his way out. Presently he encountered a stranger, who said to him, "What are you doing here, my friend, in this gloomy forest, where only wild beasts dwell?" The king replied, "I have lost my way, and am trying to find the road home." "If you will promise to give me the first living thing that meets you when you return to your palace, I will show you the right way," said the stranger.[2]

The king reflected awhile, and then answered, "Why should I run the risk of losing my good hunting-dog? I may perhaps succeed in finding my way home by myself." The stranger went

[1] Löwe suggests that Kungla is meant, which appears not improbable.

[2] This has been a common *motif* in folk-tales from the time of Jephthah downwards; but the manner in which the different stories are worked out is very various.

away, but the king wandered about in the wood till his provisions were exhausted, while he was unable to discover the least trace of the right path. Then the stranger met him a second time, and said, "Promise me the first living thing that meets you on your return to your palace." But as the king was very obstinate, he refused to promise anything yet. He once more boldly explored the forest backwards and forwards, and at length sank down exhausted under a tree, and thought that his last hour had come. Then the stranger, who was none other than the Old Boy[1] himself, appeared to the king for the third time, and said, "Don't be a fool. How can you be so fond of your dog that you are unwilling to part with him to save your life? Only promise me what I require, and you will soon be relieved from your anxiety, and your life will be saved." "My life is worth more than a thousand dogs," answered the king. "The welfare of a whole country and people is at stake. Let it be so, I will grant your request, if you will only take me home." He had hardly uttered the words when he found himself at once on the borders of the wood, and could see his palace

[1] The usual Esthonian euphemism for the Devil.

in the distance. He hurried thither, and the first thing which met him at the gate was the nurse with the royal infant, who stretched out his arms to his father. The king was horrified, and scolded the nurse, telling her to take the child away as quickly as possible. Directly afterwards came his faithful dog, and fawned upon his master, who repulsed his advances with a kick. Innocent dependants often suffer thus for the folly and ill-humour of their superiors.

As soon as the king's anger had cooled a little, he exchanged his child, a promising boy, for the daughter of a peasant, and thus the prince was reared up in the house of poor people, while the peasant's daughter slept in silken robes in the royal cradle. In a year's time, the Old Boy made his appearance to demand his due, and took the little girl with him, supposing her to be the king's child, for he knew nothing of the artifice by which the children had been changed. The king exulted at the success of his stratagem, and ordered a great feast. He loaded the parents of the stolen child with rich presents, that the prince might want for nothing in the cottage, but did not yet venture to reclaim his son, fearing lest the deception might be

discovered. The peasant family were well satisfied with the arrangement, for they had one mouth less to feed, and plenty of food and money.

Meantime the prince grew up to boyhood, and spent a very pleasant life in the house of his foster-parents. But still he was not quite happy, for as soon as he learned how the stratagem had succeeded, he was much grieved that a poor innocent girl should have to suffer the consequences of his father's thoughtlessness in his place. He formed a fixed resolve either to release the poor girl, if this was possible, or to perish with her. He could not endure the thought of becoming king by the sacrifice of a maiden.[1] One day he secretly disguised himself as a peasant lad, took a bag of peas on his shoulder, and went to the wood where his father had lost his way eighteen years before.

[1] The moral tone of some of these Esthonian tales is much higher than usual in folk-tales. In the story of the "Northern Frog," we shall see that it is considered a wrong action, involving Karmic punishment, even to steal a talisman from a demon who is trying to entrap your soul. In most folk-tales, the basest cruelty and treachery is looked upon as quite laudable when your own interests require it, even against your best friend or most generous benefactor, and much more so against a Jew or a demon. But there are other Esthonian tales ("Slyboots," for instance), in which the morality is not much superior to that of average folk-tales.

Soon after entering the wood he began to cry out, "O what an unfortunate boy I am! how far I must have wandered from the path! Who will show me the way out of this wood, for there is no human soul to be seen far or near!" Presently a stranger with a long grey beard and a leather pouch at his girdle, like a Tartar,[1] made his appearance. He gave the youth a friendly greeting, adding, "I know this neighbourhood well, and can direct you anywhere you please, if you will promise me a good return."

"What can a poor lad like me promise you?" answered the artful prince. "I have nothing more than my young life, for even the coat on my body belongs to the master whom I must serve in exchange for food and clothing."

The stranger looked at the bag of peas on the lad's shoulder, and remarked, "You can't be quite destitute, for you carry a bag which seems to be very heavy."

"There are peas in the bag," said the prince. "My old aunt died last night, and has left me so

[1] Here we find the Devil compared to a Tartar, just as in the 10th canto of the *Kalevipoeg* a water-demon is compared to a Lett.

much as this, that I may be able to set boiled peas before the watchers of the dead[1] as is the custom in this country. I have begged the peas from my host in the name of God, and was going away with them, when I struck into a forest path as a short cut, and it has led me astray, as you see."

"Then I conclude, from what you say, that you are an orphan," observed the stranger with a grin. "If you will enter my service, I happen just to be in want of a handy workman for my small household, and I've taken a fancy to you."

"Why shouldn't I, if we can come to terms?" replied the prince. "I was born to servitude, and a stranger's bread is always bitter, so that it matters little to me what master I serve. But what will you promise me for a year's service?"

"Well," said the stranger, "you shall have fresh food every day, meat twice a week, and when you work out of doors, butter or herrings as a treat, a full suit of summer and winter clothing, besides two acres of land for your own use."

"That will suit me," said the crafty prince. "Let other people bury my aunt; I'll go with you."

[1] Boiled peas and salt are provided on such occasions, as mentioned in other stories.

The Old Boy seemed well pleased at having made such a good stroke of business, and spun round on one foot like a teetotum, hallooing so loud that the wood re-echoed. Then he started off on the road with his new servant, and enlivened the tedium of the way by a variety of jokes, without observing that his companion dropped a pea from his bag at every ten or fifteen paces. The travellers halted for the night in the forest under a large fir-tree, and continued their journey next morning. The sun was already high in the heavens when they reached a large stone. Here the old man stopped, looked sharply round on all sides, whistled loudly, and then stamped on the ground three times with his left foot.[1] Suddenly a secret door opened under the stone, and revealed a covered way like the entrance to a cavern. Then the old man seized the prince's arm, and said roughly, "Follow me!"

They were in utter darkness, but it seemed to the prince that the path led them deeper and deeper into the earth. After some time a glimmer of light again grew visible, but the light did not resemble that of either the sun or moon. The prince looked

[1] The Kalevide was directed to stamp with his right foot to open the gates of Põrgu.

up in some alarm, but could see neither sun nor sky; only a mass of shining clouds floated over him, which seemed to canopy this new world, in which everything had a strange appearance. Land and water, trees and plants, animals and birds, all had a different aspect from what he had seen before. But what seemed strangest to him was the wonderful silence around, for there was not a voice or a rustle to be heard anywhere. All was as still as in the grave, and even the prince's own footsteps made no sound. Here and there a bird might be seen sitting on a bough with stretched-out neck and swelled throat, as if singing, but no sound was audible. The dogs opened their mouths to bark, and the bulls raised their heads to bellow, but neither bark nor bellow could be heard. The water flowed over the gravel without gushing, the wind waved the tops of the trees without rustling, and flies and beetles flew about without buzzing. The Old Boy did not speak a word, and when his companion tried to speak he felt his voice die away in his throat.

Nobody knows how long they travelled through this unearthly silent country. Terror seized on the heart of the prince, his hair stood on end

like bristles, and he shivered with fear, when at length, to his great joy, the first sound fell on his straining ears, and seemed to make a real country of this shadowy land. It seemed to him that a great herd of horses was toiling through swampy ground. At last the old man opened his mouth, and said, licking his lips, "The soup kettle's boiling, and they are expecting us at home." They went on some distance farther, when the prince thought he heard the sound of a sawmill, in which at least two dozen saws seemed to be at work, but the host said, "My old grandmother is already fast asleep and snoring."

Presently they reached the top of a hill, and the prince could see the homestead of his new master at some distance, but there were so many buildings that it looked more like a village or an outlying suburb than the residence of a single owner. At length they arrived, and found an empty dog-kennel at the gate. "Creep in there," said the master, "and lie quiet till I have spoken to my grandmother about you. She is very self-willed, like most old people, and can't bear a stranger in the house." The prince crept trembling into the dog-kennel, and began to repent

the rashness that had brought him into such a scrape.

After a time the host came back, called the prince from his hiding-place, and said with a wry face, "Take good note of the arrangements of our household, and take care not to go against them, or you might fare very badly.

> "Keep your eyes and ears both open,
> But your mouth fast closed for ever,
> And obey without a question:
> Think whatever it may please you;
> Never speak without permission."

When the prince crossed the threshold, his eyes fell upon a young girl of great beauty, with brown eyes and curly hair. He thought to himself, "If the old man has many such daughters as this, I should be glad to become his son-in-law. The maiden is just to my taste." The fair maiden laid the table without saying a word, set the food upon it, and then modestly took her place by the hearth, as if she had not observed the stranger. She took out needles and worsted, and began to knit a stocking. The master sat down alone at the table, and did not ask either the man or maid to join him, nor was

anything to be seen of the old grandmother. The Old Boy's appetite was immeasurable, and in a very short time he had made a clean sweep of everything on the table, though it would have been plenty for at least a dozen people. When at last he allowed his jaws to rest, he said to the maiden, "Scrape out what is left at the bottom of the pot and kettle, and content yourselves with the fragments, but throw the bones to the dog."

The prince's countenance fell at the idea of this meal from the scrapings of the kettle, which he was to share with the pretty girl and the dog. But he soon recovered his spirits when he found a very nice meal placed on the table from these fragments. During supper he cast many stolen glances at the maiden, and would have given a great deal if he could have ventured to speak to her. But whenever he was on the point of speaking, he met the imploring glance of the maiden, which seemed to say, "Silence!" So the young man allowed his eyes to speak, and gave expression to this dumb language by his good appetite, for the maiden had prepared the supper, and it must be pleasant to her to see that the guest appreciated her cookery.

Meantime the old man had lain down on the stove-bench, and made the walls re-echo with his snoring.

After supper he roused himself, and said to the prince, "You may rest for two days after your long journey, and look round the house. But come to me to-morrow evening and I will arrange your work for next day, for my household must always set about their work before I get up myself. The girl will show you your lodging." The prince made an effort to speak, but the old man came down on him like a thunderbolt, and screamed out, "You dog of a servant! if you break the rules of the house, you'll find yourself a head shorter without more ado. Hold your jaw, and off to bed with you!"

The maiden beckoned him to follow, unlocked a door and signed to him to enter. The prince thought he saw a tear glisten in her eye, and would have been only too glad to loiter on the threshold, but he was too much afraid of the old man. "It's impossible that this beautiful girl can be his daughter," thought he, "for she has a kind heart. She must be the poor girl who was brought here in my place, and for whose sake I undertook this foolhardy enterprise." He did not fall asleep for a long time, and even then his uneasy dreams gave him no

rest. He dreamed of all sorts of unknown dangers which threatened him, and it was always the form of the fair girl that came to his aid.

When he awoke next morning, his first thought was to do his best to ingratiate himself with the maiden. He found the industrious girl already at work, and helped her to draw water from the well and carry it into the house, chopped wood, kept up the fire under the pots, and helped her in all her other work. In the afternoon he went out to make himself better acquainted with his new abode, and was much surprised that he could find no trace of the old grandmother. He saw a white mare in the stable, and a black cow with a white-headed calf in the enclosure, and in other locked outhouses he thought he heard ducks, geese, fowls, &c. Breakfast and dinner were just as good as last night's supper, and he would have been very well content with his position, but that it was so very hard to hold his tongue with the maiden opposite him. On the evening of the second day he went to the master to receive his instructions for next day's work.

The old man said, "I'll give you an easy job for to-morrow. Take the scythe, and mow as much grass as the white mare needs for her day's pro-

vender, and clean out the stable. But if I should come and find the manger empty or any litter on the floor, it will go badly enough with you. Take good heed!"

The prince was well pleased, for he thought, "I shall soon be able to manage this piece of work, for although I have never handled either plough or scythe before, I have often seen how easily the country-people manage these tools, and I am quite strong enough." But when he was about to go to bed, the maiden crept in gently, and asked in a low voice, "What work has he given you?" "I've an easy task for to-morrow," answered the prince. "I have only to mow grass for the white mare, and to clean out the stable; that's all." "O poor fellow!" sighed the maiden, "how can you ever accomplish it? The white mare is the master's grandmother, and she is an insatiable creature, for whom twenty mowers could hardly provide the daily fodder, and another twenty would have to work from morning till night to clear the litter from the stable. How will you be able to manage both tasks alone? Take my advice, and follow it exactly. When you have thrown a few loads of grass to the

mare, you must plait a strong rope of willow-twigs in her sight. She will ask you what this is for, and you must answer, 'To bind you up so tightly that you will not feel disposed to eat more than I give you, or to litter the stable after I have cleared it.'" As soon as the girl had finished speaking, she slid out of the room as gently as she had come, without giving the youth time to thank her. He repeated her instructions to himself several times, for fear of forgetting anything, and then went to sleep.

Early next morning he set to work. He plied the scythe lustily, and soon mowed down so much grass that he could rake several loads together. He took one load to the mare, but when he returned with the second he found with dismay that the manger was already empty, and that there was half a ton of litter on the floor. He saw now that he would have been lost without the maiden's good advice, and resolved to follow it at once. He began to plait the rope, when the mare turned her head and asked in astonishment, "My dear son, what do you want with this rope?" "O nothing at all," he answered; "I am only going to bind you up so tightly that you

won't care to eat more than I choose to give you, or to drop more litter than I choose to carry away." The white mare looked at him, and sighed deeply once or twice, but it was clear that she understood him, for long after midday there was still fodder in the manger and the floor remained clean. Presently the master came to inspect the work, and when he found everything in good order he was much surprised, and asked, "Are you clever enough to do this yourself, or did any one give you good advice?" But the prince was on his guard, and answered at once, "I have no one to help me but my own poor head and a mighty God in heaven." The old man was silenced, and left the stable grumbling, but the prince was delighted that everything had succeeded so well.

In the evening the master said, "I have no particular work for you to-morrow, but as the maid has plenty to do in the house, you must milk the black cow. But take care not to leave a drop of milk in the udder. If I find that you have done so, it might cost you your life." As the prince went away, he thought, "If there is not some trick in this, I cannot find the work hard. Thank God, I have strong fingers, and

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will not leave a drop of milk behind." But when he was about to retire to rest, the maiden came to him again, and asked, "What work have you to do to-morrow?" "I've a whole holiday to-morrow," answered the prince. "All I have to do to-morrow is to milk the black cow, and not leave a drop of milk in the udder." "O you unfortunate fellow!" sighed she, "how will you ever accomplish it? Know, dear young stranger, that if you were to milk the black cow from morning till evening, the milk would continue to flow in one unbroken stream. I am convinced that the old man is bent on your ruin. But fear nothing, for as long as I am alive no harm shall happen to you, if you will remember my advice, and follow it exactly. When you go milking, take a pan full of hot coals, and a smith's tongs with you. When you reach the place, put the tongs in the fire, and blow the coals to a bright flame. If the black cow asks what this is for, answer her as I am about to whisper in your ear." Then the maiden crept out of the room on tiptoe as she had come, and the prince lay down to sleep.

The prince got up almost before dawn next day, and went to the cowhouse with the milk-pail in

one hand, and a pan of live coals in the other. The black cow looked at his proceedings for a while in silence, and then asked, "What are you doing, my dear son?" "Nothing at all," he replied; "but some cows have a bad habit of keeping back milk in their udders after they are milked, and in such cases I find hot tongs useful to prevent the chance of any waste." The black cow sighed deeply and seemed scared. The prince then took the pail, milked the cow dry, and when he tried again after a while he found not a drop of milk in her udder. Some time after the master came into the cow-house, and as he was also unable to draw a drop of milk, he asked angrily, "Are you so clever yourself, or did any one give you good advice?" But the prince answered as before, "I have no one to help me but my own poor head and a mighty God in heaven." The old man went off in great vexation.

When the prince went to the master in the evening, the latter said, "There is still a heap of hay in the field that I should like to have brought under cover during dry weather. Bring the hay home to-morrow, but take care not to leave a particle behind, or it might cost you your life." The prince left the room well pleased,

thinking, "It's no great job to bring hay home. I have only to load it, and the mare must draw it. I won't spare the master's grandmother." In the evening the maiden crept to his side, and asked about his work for to-morrow. The prince said smiling, "I am learning all sorts of farmwork here. I have to bring home a heap of hay to-morrow, and only to take care not to leave a scrap behind. This is all my work for to-morrow." "O poor fellow!" sighed she, "how will you ever do it? If you were to set to work for a week, with the help of all the inhabitants of a large district, you could not remove this heap. Whatever you took away from the top would grow up again from the ground directly. Mark well what I say. You must get up to-morrow before daybreak, and lead the white mare from the stable, taking with you some strong cords. Then go to the haycock, fasten the cords round it, and then bind them to the mare. When this is done, climb on the haycock, and begin to count one, two, three, four, five, six, and so on. The mare will ask what you are counting, and you must answer her as I whisper." Then the maiden left the room, and the prince went to bed.

When he awoke next morning, the first thing he remembered was the maiden's good advice. So he took some strong ropes with him, led out the white mare, and rode on her back to the haycock, but found that the so-called haycock contained at least fifty loads. The prince did all that the maiden had told him, and when he was sitting on the heap, and had counted up to twenty, the white mare asked in surprise, "What are you counting, my dear son?" "Nothing at all," said he; "I was only amusing myself by counting up the packs of wolves[1] in the forest, but there are so many that I can't reckon them all up." He had hardly spoken when the white mare darted off like the wind, and the haycock was safely housed in a few moments. The master was not a little surprised, when he came out after breakfast, to find that the new labourer had already finished his day's work. He put him the same question as before, and received the same reply; and he went off shaking his head and cursing.

In the evening, the prince went as usual to inquire about his work, and the old man said,

[1] In Esthonian legends, the wolf is the great enemy of the devil See vol. ii. Beast-stories.

"To-morrow you must take the white-headed calf to pasture, but take care that he doesn't run away, or it might cost you your life." The prince thought, "There are many ten-year old farm-boys who have whole herds to manage, and surely I can't find it so very difficult to look after one calf." But when the maiden heard of it she said, "Know that this calf is so wild that he would run three times round the world in a day.[1] Take this silk thread, and bind one end to the left fore-leg of the calf, and the other to the little toe of your left foot, and then the calf will not be able to stir a step from your side, whether you are walking, standing, or lying down." Then she left him, and the prince lay down, but it vexed him to think that he had again forgotten to thank her for her good advice.

Next morning he followed the advice of the friendly maiden, and led the calf to the pasture by the silken thread. It remained by his side like a faithful dog, and in the evening he led it back to the stall, where the old man met him

[1] We meet with similar miraculously swift animals in other Esthonian tales.

angrily, and, after the usual question and answer, went off in a fury, and the prince thought it must be the mention of the holy name which kept him under restraint.

Late in the evening the prince went to his master for instructions, when the old man gave him a bag of barley, saying, "I will give you a holiday to-morrow, and you may sleep as long as you like, but you must work hard to-night instead. Sow me this barley, which will spring up and ripen quickly; then you must cut it, thresh it, and winnow it, so that you can malt it and grind it. You must brew beer of this malt, and when I wake to-morrow morning, you must bring me a jug of fresh beer for my morning drink. Take care to follow my instructions exactly, or it might easily cost you your life."

This time the prince was quite confounded, and on leaving the room, he stood outside weeping bitterly, and said to himself, "This is my last night, for no mortal can do this work, and the clever maiden's aid will avail me no longer. O unhappy wretch that I am! why was I so thoughtless as to leave the king's palace, and thrust myself into this danger! I cannot even lament my unhappy lot to

the stars in heaven, for here there are neither stars nor sky. But yet God reigns over all."

He was still standing with the bag of barley in his hand when the house-door opened and the kind maiden came out. She asked what troubled him so much, and he replied, "Alas! my last hour has come, and we must part for ever. I will tell you all before I die. I am the only son of a great king, from whom I should inherit a mighty empire; but now all hope and happiness are at an end." Then he told the maiden with tears of the task the old man had laid upon him; but it pained him to see that she did not seem to share his trouble. When he had finished his long story, she smiled and said, "My dear prince, you may sleep quietly to-night, and enjoy yourself all day to-morrow. Take my advice, and don't despise it because I am only a poor servant-girl. Take this little key, which unlocks the third hen-house, where the Old Boy keeps the spirits who serve him.[1] Throw the bag of barley into the house, and repeat word for word the commands that you have received from the master, and add, 'If you depart a hair's breadth from my

[1] The outhouses in Sarvik's palace (*Kalevipoeg*, Canto 14) contained mere ordinary stores.

instructions, you will all perish together; but if you want help, the door of the seventh pen will be open to-night, in which dwell the most powerful of the old man's spirits.'"

The prince carried out all her instructions, and then lay down to sleep. When he awoke in the morning and went to the beer tub, he found it full of beer violently working, with the foam flowing over the edge. He tasted the beer, filled a large jug with the foaming drink, and brought it to his master, who was just getting up. But instead of the thanks which he expected from him, the old man broke out in uncontrollable fury, "That's not from yourself. I see you have good friends and helpers. All right! we'll talk again this evening."

In the evening the old man said, "I have no work for you to-morrow, but you must come to my bedside to-morrow morning, and shake hands with me."

The prince was amused at the old man's queer whim, and laughed when he told the maiden. But when she heard it she became very serious, and said, "Now you must look to yourself, for the old man intends to eat you to-morrow morning, and there is only one way of escape. You must heat a

shovel red-hot in the stove,[1] and offer it to him instead of your own hand." Then she hastened away, and the prince went to bed. Next morning he took good care to heat the shovel red-hot before the old man awoke. At last he heard him shouting, "What has become of you, you lazy fellow? Come and shake hands with me." But when the prince entered the room with the red-hot shovel in his hand, the old man cried out with a whining voice, "I am very ill to-day, and cannot take your hand. But come back this evening to receive my orders."

The prince loitered about all day, and went to the old man in the evening as usual to receive his commands for the morrow. He found him very friendly, and he said, "I am well pleased with you. Come to me to-morrow morning with the maiden, for I know that you have long been attached to each other, and I will give her to you as your bride."

The prince would have liked to dance and shout for joy, but by good luck he remembered the strict rules of the house, and kept silent. But when he

[1] A not very unusual incident in folk-tales, though it often takes the form of offering an iron bar instead of your own hand to a giant who wishes to shake hands with you.

spoke to his betrothed of his good fortune, and expected that she would receive the news with equal delight, he saw her turn as white as the wall with terror, and her tongue seemed to be paralysed. As soon as she recovered herself a little, she said, "The Old Boy has discovered that I have been your counsellor, and has resolved to destroy us both. We must fly this very night, or we are lost. Take an axe, and strike off the head of the white-headed calf with a heavy blow, and then split the skull in two with a second stroke. In the brain of the calf you will find a shining red reel, which you must bring me. I will arrange whatever else is needful." The prince thought, "I would rather kill an innocent calf than sacrifice both myself and this dear girl, and if our flight succeeds, I shall see my home once more. The peas I sowed must have sprung up by this time, so that we cannot miss our way."

He went into the stall, and found the cow and the calf lying asleep near together, and they slept so fast that they did not hear his approach. But when he struck off the calf's head, the cow groaned very loud, as if she had had a bad dream. He hastened to split the calf's skull with the second

blow, and lo! the whole stall suddenly became as light as if it was day. The red reel fell out of the brain, and shone like a little sun. The prince wrapped it carefully in a cloth, and hid it in his bosom. It was fortunate that the cow did not wake, or she would have begun to roar so loud that she might easily have roused her master too.

The prince found the maiden waiting for him at the gate with a small bundle on her arm. "Where is the reel?" she whispered. "Here," replied the prince, and gave it to her. "Now we must hasten our flight," said she, and she unravelled a small part of the reel from the cloth that its shining light might illuminate the darkness of the way like a lantern. As the prince had expected, the peas had all sprung up, so that they could not miss the way. The maiden then told the prince that she had once overheard a conversation between the old man and his grandmother, and had learned that she was a princess whom the Old Boy had stolen from her parents by a trick. The prince knew the real state of the case better, but kept silence, rejoicing inwardly that he had succeeded in freeing the poor girl. The

travellers must have gone a long way before the day began to break.

The Old Boy did not wake till late in the morning, and rubbed the sleep out of his eyes for a long time before he remembered that he was going to devour the couple. After waiting for them a good while he said to himself, "Perhaps they haven't quite finished their preparations for the wedding." But at last he got tired of waiting so long, and shouted out, "Ahoy, man and maid, what has become of you?" He repeated the cry several times, shouting and cursing, but neither man nor maid appeared. At last he scrambled out of bed in a rage, and went in search of the defaulters. But he found the house empty, and discovered, too, that the beds had not been slept in. Then he rushed into the stall, and when he saw the calf slaughtered and the magic reel stolen, he comprehended all. He cursed till everything was black, and opened the third spirit-house, sending his messengers forth to seek the fugitives. "Bring me them just as you find them, for I must have them," said the Old Boy, and the spirits flew forth like the wind.

The fugitives were just crossing a great plain,

when the maiden suddenly stopped and said, "All is not as it should be. The reel moves in my hand, and we are certainly pursued." When they looked back, they saw a black cloud rushing towards them with great speed. Then the maiden turned the reel thrice in her hand and said:

"Hear me, reel, and reel, O hearken;
Fain would I become a streamlet,
Where as fish my lover's swimming."

Instantly they were both transformed. The maiden flowed away like a brook, and the prince swam in the water like a little fish. The spirits rushed past, and turned after a time, and flew back home; but they did not touch the brook or the fish. As soon as the pursuers were gone, the brook became a maiden, and the fish a youth, and they continued their journey in human form.

When the spirits returned, weary and empty-handed, the Old Boy asked if they had not noticed anything unusual on their journey.

"Nothing at all," they answered, "but a brook on the plain, with a single fish swimming in it."

The old man growled angrily, "There they were! there they were!" Immediately he threw open the doors of the fifth pen and let out the spirits,

commanding them to drink up the water of the brook, and to capture the fish; and the spirits flew off like the wind.

The travellers were just approaching the edge of a wood, when the maiden stopped, saying, "All is not as it should be. The reel moves again in my hand." They looked round, and saw another cloud in the sky, darker than the first, and with red borders. "These are our pursuers," she cried, and turned the reel three times round in her hand, saying:

"Hear me, reel, and reel, O hear me;
Change us both upon the instant:
I'll become a wild rose-briar,
And my love a rose upon it."

Instantly the maiden was changed into a wild rose-bush, and the youth hung upon it in the form of a rose. The spirits rushed away over their heads, and did not return for some time; but they saw nothing of the brook and the fish, and they did not trouble about the wild rose-tree. As soon as their pursuers were gone, the rose-tree and the rose again became a maiden and a youth, and after their short rest they hurried away.

"Have you found them?" cried the old man,

when the spirits returned and crouched before him.

"No," answered their leader; "we found neither brook nor fish on the plain."

"Did you see nothing else remarkable on the way?" asked their master. The leader answered, "We saw nothing but a wild rose-bush on the edge of the wood, with a single rose upon it." "Fools!" cried the old man, "there they were! there they were!" He threw open the door of the seventh pen, and sent out his most powerful spirits to search for the fugitives. "Bring them me just as you find them, for I must have them, dead or alive. Tear up the accursed rose-tree by the roots, and bring everything else with you that looks strange." And the spirits rushed forth like a tempest.

The fugitives were just resting in the shade of a wood, and strengthening themselves for further efforts with food and drink. Suddenly the maiden cried out, "All is not right, for the reel feels as if it was being pulled from my bosom. We are certainly again pursued, and the danger is close at hand, but the wood still hides us from our enemies." Then she took the reel from her bosom,

and turned it over three times in her hand, saying:

"Hear me reel, and reel, O hear me;
To a puff of wind transform me,
To a gnat transform my lover."

Instantly they were both transformed, and the maiden rose into the air as a puff of wind, and the prince sported in the breeze like a gnat. The mighty host of spirits swept over them like a tempest, and returned some time afterwards, as they could neither find the rose-bush nor anything else remarkable. But they were hardly gone before the youth and the maiden resumed their proper forms, and the maiden cried out, "Now we must make haste, before the old man himself comes to look for us, for he would know us under any disguise."

They ran on for some distance till they reached the dark passage, which they could easily climb up by the bright light of the reel. They were breathless and exhausted when they reached the great rock; when the maiden again turned the reel three times round, saying:

"Hear me, reel, and reel, O hear me;
Let the rock aside be lifted,
And a portal opened for us."

Instantly the rock was lifted, and they found themselves once more upon the earth. "God be praised," cried the maiden, "we are saved. The Old Boy has no further power over us here, and we can guard against his cunning. But now, my friend, we must part. Do you go to your parents, and I will go to mine." "By no means," replied the prince, "I cannot part from you, and you must come with me, and become my wife. You have passed days of sorrow with me, and now it is only right that we should enjoy days of happiness together." The maiden resisted for a time, but at last she consented to accompany the youth.

They met with a woodcutter in the wood, who told them that there was great trouble in the palace and throughout the whole country, because of the unaccountable disappearance of the king's son, every trace of whom had been lost for years.[1] The maiden made use of the magic reel to provide the prince with suitable robes in which to present himself to his father. Meanwhile she stayed be-

[1] A visit to any description of non-human intelligent beings in Esthonian tales almost always extends to years, though it may have apparently lasted for only a day or two.

hind in a peasant's cottage, till the prince should have informed his father of his adventures.[1]

But the old king had died before the prince's arrival, for trouble at the loss of his only son had shortened his life. On his death-bed he repented bitterly of his thoughtless promise, and of his treachery in delivering a poor innocent maiden to the old rascal, for which God had punished him by the loss of his son. The prince mourned for the death of his father, as befitted a good son, and buried him with great honours. Then he mourned for three days, refusing all food and drink. On the fourth morning he presented himself to the people as their new ruler, assembled his councillors, and related to them the wonderful things that he had seen and experienced in the Old Boy's dwelling, and did not forget to say how the clever maiden had saved his life. Then the councillors all exclaimed with one voice, "She must become your consort and our queen."

When the young king set out to seek his bride, he was much surprised to meet the maiden

[1] In most stories of this class, the hero forgets his companion on reaching home, either by a charm or by breaking a taboo.

advancing in regal state. The magic reel had provided her with everything that was necessary, and all the people supposed that she must be the daughter of some very wealthy king, and came from a distant country. Then the wedding festivities commenced, which lasted four weeks, and they lived together in happiness and prosperity for many a pleasant year.[1]

[1] Another instance of a child being asked for by an ambiguous request is to be found in the story of the Clever Countrywoman (Jannsen), which must not be confounded with one in Kreutzwold's collection with a nearly similar title, and of which we append an abstract. The story ends, rather unusually, in a subterfuge. A herd-boy returned one evening, and reported to his mistress that a cow was missing. The woman went herself, but everything round her was changed by magic, and she could not find her way home. However, as the mist rose from the moor, a little white man appeared, whom she recognised as one of the moor-dwellers. He took her home, and returned her cow, on her promising him what she would carry night and day under her heart. From thenceforth she took care always to wear her apron. A year afterwards, she became the mother of a fine boy, and when he was nine weeks old, the window was opened one night, and the intruder cried out, "Give me what you have carried night and day under your heart, as you promised." The woman flung him her apron, crying out, "In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, receive what I promised you;" and he instantly vanished with the apron.

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SLYBOOTS.

(KREUTZWALD.)

IN the days of the son of Kalev there reigned a very rich king of Kungla, who gave a great feast to his subjects every seven years at midsummer, which lasted for two or three weeks together.[1] The time for the feast came round again, and its commencement had been looked forward to for some months, though with some uncertainty; for twice already, seven years ago and fourteen years ago, the anticipated festival had come to nothing. Both times the king had made full preparations for the feast, but no man had tasted it. This seemed strange and incredible, but there were many people everywhere who could bear witness to the facts. It was said that on both these occasions an unknown stranger had come to the head-cook and asked to be permitted to taste a little of the food and drink, but the moment he had dipped his spoon in the soup-kettle, and put the froth in the beer-can to his

[1] These great public periodical feasts are Eastern rather than Western. Compare the story of Ali Shar and Zumurrud (*Thousand and One Nights*).

mouth, the whole contents of the storehouses, pantries, and cellars vanished in a moment, so that not a scrap or drop of anything remained.[1] The cooks and kitchen-boys had all seen and sworn to the truth of the matter, but the people were so enraged at the collapse of the feast, that the king was obliged to appease them seven years before, by ordering the head-cook to be hanged for having given the stranger permission to taste the food. In order to prevent any repetition of the trouble, the king proclaimed that he would richly reward any one who would undertake the preparation of the feast; and at length, when no one would undertake the responsibility, the king promised his youngest daughter in marriage to any one who should succeed, but added that failure would be punished with death.

A long way from the capital, and near the borders of the kingdom, lived a rich farmer who had three sons, the youngest of whom showed great intelligence from his youth, because the Meadow-Queen[2] had nursed him, and had often secretly given him the breast. The father called

[1] A similar feat is performed by Sarvik in the *Kalevipoeg*, Canto 17.

[2] See page 13.

him Slyboots, and used to say to the brothers, "You two elder ones must earn your living by your bodily strength and by the work of your hands, but as for you, little Slyboots, you will be able to rise higher in the world than your brothers, by your own cleverness."

Before the father died, he divided all his corn-land and meadows between his two elder sons, but to the youngest he gave enough money to enable him to go forth into the wide world to seek his fortune. But the father's corpse was scarcely cold when the two elder brothers stripped the youngest of every farthing, and thrust him out of the door, saying mockingly, "Your cleverness alone, Slyboots, is to exalt you over our heads, and therefore you might find the money troublesome to you."

The youngest brother scorned to notice the ill-treatment of his brothers, and went cheerfully on his way. "Good fortune may come from God," was the comforting reflection which he took with him from his father's house, and he whistled away his sad thoughts. Just as he was beginning to feel hungry, he encountered two travelling journeymen. His pleasant countenance and cheerful talk pleased them, and when they rested, they shared

their provisions with him, so that Slyboots did not fare so badly on the first day. He parted from his companions before evening quite contented, for his present comfort left him without anxiety for the morrow. He could sleep anywhere with the green grass for a couch and the blue sky above, and a stone under his head served as well as a soft pillow. Next morning he set out on his way again, and arrived at a lonely farm, where a young woman was sitting at the door, weeping bitterly. Slyboots asked what was her trouble, and she answered, "I have a bad husband, who beats me every day if I cannot humour his mad freaks. He has ordered me to-day to cook him a fish which is not a fish, and which has eyes, but not in its head. Where in the world shall I find such a creature?" "Don't cry, young woman," answered Slyboots. "Your husband wants a crab, which is a water-animal to be sure, but is not a fish, and which has eyes, but not in its head." The woman thanked him for his good advice, and gave him something to eat, and a bag of provisions which would last him for several days. As soon as he received this unexpected assistance, he determined to set out for the royal capital, where cleverness

was likely to be in most request, and where he hoped to make his fortune.

Wherever he went, he heard every one talking of the king's midsummer banquet, and when he heard of the reward which was offered to the man who should prepare the feast, he began to reflect whether he might not be able to accomplish the adventure. "If I succeed," said he to himself, "I shall find myself at a stroke on the highway to fortune; and in the worst case of all, I shall only lose my life, and we must all die sooner or later. If I begin in the right way, why shouldn't I succeed? Perhaps I may be more fortunate than others. And even if the king should refuse me his daughter, he must at least give me the promised reward in money, which will make me a rich man."

Buoyed up with such thoughts, he pursued his journey, singing and whistling like a lark, sometimes resting under the shadow of a bush during the heat of the day, and sleeping at night under a tree or in the open fields. One morning he finished the last remains of his provisions, and in the evening he arrived safe and sound at the city.

Next day he craved audience of the king. The king saw that he had to deal with an intelligent and

enterprising man, and it was easy for them to come to terms. "What is your name?" asked the king. The man of brains replied, "My baptismal name is Nicodemus, but I was always called Slyboots at home, to show that I did not fall on my head." "I will leave you your name," returned the king, "but your head must answer for all mischief if the affair should go wrong."

Slyboots asked the king to give him seven hundred workmen, and set about his preparations without delay. He ordered twenty large sheds to be constructed, and arranged in a square like a series of large cowhouses, so that a great open space was left in the middle, to which led one single large gate. He ordered great cooking-pots and caldrons to be built in the rooms which were to be heated, and the ovens were furnished with iron spits, where meat and sausages could be roasted. Other sheds were furnished with great boilers and vats for brewing beer, so that the boilers were above and the vats below. Other houses without fireplaces were fitted up as storehouses for cold provisions, such as black bread, barm bracks, white bread, &c. All needful stores, such as flour, groats, meat, salt, lard, butter, &c., were brought into the

open space, and fifty soldiers were stationed before the door, so that nothing should be touched by the finger of any thief. The king came every day to view the preparations, and praised the skill and forethought of Slyboots. Besides all this, several dozen bakehouses were built in the open air, and a special guard of soldiers was stationed before each. They slaughtered for the feast a thousand oxen, two hundred calves, five hundred swine, ten thousand sheep, and many more small animals, which were driven together in flocks from all quarters. Stores of provisions were constantly brought by river in boats and barges, and by land in waggons, and this went on without intermission for several weeks. Seven thousand hogsheads were brewed of beer alone. Although the seven hundred assistants toiled late and early, and many additional labourers were engaged, yet most of the toil and trouble fell upon Slyboots, who was obliged to look sharply after the others at every point. He had warned the cooks, the bakers, and the brewers, in the most stringent manner, not to allow any strange mouth to taste the food or drink, and any one who broke this command was threatened with the gallows. If such a greedy stranger should make his appearance

anywhere, he was to be brought immediately to the superintendent of the preparations.

On the morning of the first day of the feast, word was brought to Slyboots that an unknown old man had come into one of the kitchens, and asked the cook to allow him to taste a little from the soup-kettle with a spoon, which the cook could not permit him to do on his own responsibility. Slyboots ordered the stranger to be brought before him, and presently he beheld a little old man with grey hair, who humbly begged to be allowed to taste the food and drink prepared for the banquet. Slyboots told him to come into one of the kitchens, when he would gratify his wish if it were possible. As they went, he scanned the old man sharply, to see whether he could not detect something strange about him. Presently he observed a shining gold ring on the ring-finger of the old man's left hand. When they reached the kitchen, Slyboots asked, "What security can you give me that no harm shall come of it if I let you taste the food?" "My lord," answered the stranger, "I have nothing to offer you as a pledge." Slyboots pointed to the fine gold ring and demanded that as a pledge. The old fellow resisted with all his might,

protesting that the ring was a token of remembrance from his dead wife, and he had vowed never to take it from his hand, lest some misfortune should happen. "Then it is quite impossible for me to grant your request," said Slyboots, "for I cannot permit any one to taste either the food or drink without a pledge." The old man was so anxious about it that at last he gave his ring as a pledge.

Just as he was about to dip his spoon in the pot, Slyboots struck him so heavy a blow on the head with the flat of an axe, that it might have felled the strongest ox; but the old fellow did not fall, but only staggered a little. Then Slyboots seized him by the beard with both hands, and ordered strong ropes to be brought, with which he bound the old man hand and foot, and hung him up by the legs to a beam. Then Slyboots said to him mockingly, "You may wait there till the feast is over, and then we will resume our conversation. Meantime, I'll keep your ring, on which your power depends, as a token." The old man was obliged to submit, whether he liked it or not, for he was bound so firmly that he could not move hand or foot.

Then the great feast began, to which the people

flocked in thousands from all quarters. Although the feasting lasted for three whole weeks, there was no want of either food or drink, for there was plenty and to spare.

The people were much pleased, and had nothing but praise for the king and the manager of the feast. When the king was about to pay Slyboots the promised reward, he answered, "I have still a little business to transact with the stranger before I receive my reward." Then he took seven strong men with him, armed with heavy cudgels, and took them to the place where the old man had been hanging for the last three weeks. "Now, then," said Slyboots, "grasp your cudgels firmly, and belabour the old man so that he shall never forget his hospitable reception for the rest of his life." The seven men began to whack the old man all at once, and would soon have made an end of his life, if the rope had not given way under their blows. The little man fell down, and vanished underground in an instant, leaving a wide opening behind him. Then said Slyboots, "I have his pledge, with which I must follow him. Bring the king a thousand greetings from me, and tell him to divide my reward among the poor, if I should not return."

He then crept downwards through the hole in which the old man had disappeared. At first he found the pathway very narrow, but it widened considerably at the depth of a few fathoms, so that he was able to advance easily. Steps were hewn in the rock, so that he did not slip, notwithstanding the darkness. Slyboots went on for some distance, till he came to a door. He looked through a crack, and saw three young girls[1] sitting with the old man, whose head was resting on the lap of one of them. The girl was saying, "If I only rub the bruise a few times more with the bell,[2] the pain and swelling will disappear." Slyboots thought, "That is certainly the place where I struck the old man with the back of the axe three weeks ago." He decided to wait behind the door till the master of the house had lain down to sleep and the fire was extinguished. Presently the old man said, "Help me into my room, that I may go to bed, for my body is quite out of joint, and I can't move hand or foot." Then

[1] As in the *Kalevipoeg*, Canto 13; and the story of the Gold-Spinners, &c.

[2] Compare p. 121 (antea). The bell is not mentioned elsewhere in this story.

they brought him to his room. When it grew dark, and the girls had left the room, Slyboots crept gently in, and hid himself behind the beer-barrel.[1]

Presently the girls came back, and spoke gently, so as not to rouse the old man. "The bruise on the head is of no consequence," said one, "and the sprained body will also soon be cured, but the loss of the ring of strength is irreparable, and this troubles the old man more than his bodily sufferings." Soon afterwards they heard the old man snoring, and Slyboots came out of his hiding-place and made friends with the maidens. At first they were rather frightened, but the clever youth soon contrived to dispel their alarm, and they allowed him to stay there for the night. The maidens told him that the old man possessed two great treasures, a magic sword and a rod of rowan-wood, and he resolved to possess himself of both. The rod would form a bridge over the sea for its possessor, and he who bore the sword could destroy the most numerous army.[2] On the following evening

[1] A beer-barrel with a tap, for general use, often stands in the houses of the Esthonian peasantry.

[2] "And as to the sword, if it be drawn against an army, and its bearer shake it, he will rout the army; and if he say to it at the

Slyboots contrived to seize upon the wand and the sword, and escaped before daybreak with the help of the youngest girl. But the passage had disappeared from before the door, and in its place he found a large enclosure, beyond which was a broad sea.

As soon as Slyboots was gone the girls began to quarrel, and their loud talking woke up the old man. He learned from what they said that a stranger had been there, and he rose up in a passion, and found the wand and sword gone. "My best treasures are stolen!" he roared, and, forgetting his bruises, he rushed out. Slyboots was still sitting on the beach, thinking whether he should try the power of the wand, or seek for a dry path. Suddenly he heard a rushing sound behind him like a gust of wind. When he looked round, he saw the old man charging upon him like a madman. He sprang up, and had just time to strike the waves with the rod, and to cry out, "Bridge before, water behind!" He had scarcely spoken, when he found himself standing on a bridge

time of his shaking it, 'Slay this army,' there will proceed from that sword a lightning which will slay the whole army."—*Story of Joodar* (*Thousand and One Nights*).

over the sea, already at some distance from the shore.[1]

The old man came to the beach panting and puffing, but stopped short when he saw the thief on the bridge over the sea. He called out, snuffling, "Nicodemus, my son, where are you going?" "Home, papa," was the reply. "Nicodemus, my son, you struck me on the head with an axe, and hung me up to a beam by the legs." "Yes, papa." "Nicodemus, my son, did you call seven men to beat me, and steal my gold ring from me?" "Yes, papa." "Nicodemus, my son, have you bamboozled my daughters?" "Yes, papa." "Nicodemus, my son, have you stolen my sword and wand?" "Yes, papa." "Nicodemus, my son, will you come back?" "Yes, papa," answered Slyboots again. Meantime he had advanced so far on the bridge, that he could no longer hear the old man speak. When he had crossed the sea, he inquired the nearest way to the royal city, and hastened thither to claim his reward.

But lo! he found everything very different from what he had expected. Both his brothers had

[1] Compare the scene between the Kalevide and Tühi, in Canto 15 of the poem.

entered the service of the king, one as a coachman and the other as a chamberlain. Both were living in grand style and were rich people. When Slyboots applied to the king for his reward, the latter answered, "I waited for you for a whole year, and I neither saw nor heard anything of you. I supposed you were dead, and was about to divide your reward among the poor, as you desired. But one day your elder brothers arrived to inherit your fortune. I left the matter to the court, who assigned the money to them, because it was supposed that you were dead. Since then your brothers have entered my service, and both still remain in it." When Slyboots heard what the king said, he thought he must be dreaming, for he imagined that he had been only two nights in the old man's subterranean dwelling, and had then taken a few days to return home; but now it appeared that each night had been as long as a year. He would not go to law with his brothers, but abandoned the money to them, thanked God that he had escaped with his life, and looked out for some fresh employment. The king's cook engaged him as kitchen-boy, and he now had to turn the joints on the spit every day. His brothers

despised him for his mean employment, and did not like to have anything to do with him, although he still loved them. One evening he told them much of what he had seen in the under-world, where the geese and ducks had gold and silver plumage. The brothers related this to the king, and begged him to send their youngest brother to fetch these curious birds. The king sent for the kitchen-boy, and ordered him to start next morning in search of the birds with the costly feathers.

Slyboots set out next day with a heavy heart, but he took with him the ring, the wand, and the sword, which he had carefully preserved. Some days afterwards he reached the sea, and saw an old man[1] with a long grey beard sitting on a stone at the place where he had reached land after his flight. When Slyboots came nearer, the old man asked, "Why are you so sad, my friend?" Slyboots told him how badly he had fared, and the old man bid him be of good cheer, and not vex himself, adding, "No harm can happen to you, as long as you wear the ring of strength." He then gave Slyboots a mussel-shell,[2] and advised him to

[1] This old man may have been the consort of the Meadow Queen. *Cf.* pp. 188, 259.

[2] We shall find mussel-shells used as boats in other tales.

build the bridge with the magic wand to the middle of the sea, and then to step on the shell with his left foot, when he would immediately find himself in the under-world, while every one there was asleep. He also advised him to make himself a bag of spun yarn in which to put the water-birds with gold and silver plumage, and then he could return unmolested. Everything fell out as the old man predicted, but Slyboots had hardly reached the sea-shore with his booty when he heard his former acquaintance behind him; and when he was on the bridge he heard him calling out, "Nicodemus, my son," and repeating the same questions as before. At last he asked if he had stolen the birds? Slyboots answered "Yes" to every question, and hastened on.

Slyboots arrived at the royal city in the evening, as his friend with the grey beard had foretold, and the yarn bag held the birds so well that none had escaped. The king made him a present, and told him to go back next day, for he had heard from the two elder brothers that the lord of the under-world had many gold and silver utensils, which the king desired for his own use. Slyboots did not venture to refuse,

but he went very unwillingly, because he did not know how to manage the affair. However, when he reached the sea-shore, he met his friend with the grey beard, who asked the reason of his sadness. The old man gave Slyboots another mussel-shell, and a handful of small stones, with the following advice. "If you go there in the afternoon, you will find the father in bed taking his siesta, the daughters spinning in the sitting-room, and the grandmother in the kitchen scouring the gold and silver vessels bright. Climb nimbly on the chimney, throw down the stones tied up in a bag on the old woman's neck, come down yourself as quick as possible, put the costly vessels in the yarn bag, and then run off as fast as your legs will carry you."

Slyboots thanked his friend, and followed his advice exactly. But when he dropped the bag of pebbles, it expanded into a six hundred weight sack of paving stones, which dashed the old woman to the ground. In a moment Slyboots swept all the gold and silver vessels into his bag and took to flight. When the Old Boy heard the noise, he thought the chimney had fallen down, and did not venture to get up directly. But when he

had called the grandmother for a long time without receiving any answer, he was obliged to go himself. When he discovered the misfortune that had happened, he hastened in pursuit of the thief, who could not be gone far. Slyboots was already on the sea, when his pursuer reached the shore panting and puffing. As before, the Old Boy cried out, "Nicodemus, my son," and repeated the former questions. At last he asked, "Nicodemus, my son, have you stolen my gold and silver utensils?" "Certainly, my father," answered Slyboots. "Nicodemus, my son, do you promise to come again?" "No, my father," answered Slyboots, hurrying along the bridge. Although the old man cursed and scolded after the thief, he could not catch him, and he had now been despoiled of all his magic treasures.

Slyboots found his friend with the grey beard waiting for him on the other side of the sea, and he threw down the bag of heavy gold and silverware, which the ring of strength had enabled him to bring away, and sat down to rest his weary limbs.

The old man now told him much that shocked him. "Your brothers hate you, and will do all

they can to destroy you, if you do not oppose their wicked attempts. They will urge the king on to set you tasks in which you are very likely to perish. When you bring your rich load to the king this evening, you will find him friendly disposed towards you; and then ask, as your only reward, that his daughter should be hidden behind the door in the evening, to hear what your brothers talk about together."

When Slyboots came before the king with his rich booty, which was enough to make at least ten horse-loads, he found him extremely kind and friendly, and he took the opportunity to make the request which his old friend had advised. The king was glad that the treasure-bringer asked for no greater reward, and ordered his daughter to hide herself behind the door in the evening, to overhear what the coachman and the chamberlain were talking about.

The brothers had grown haughty with prosperity, and boasted of their good luck, and what was worse, they both boasted to each other of the favours of the princess in her own hearing! She ran to her father, flushed with shame and anger, and told him weeping what shameful lies she had

heard with her own ears, and begged him to punish the wretches. The king immediately ordered them both to be thrown into prison, and when they had confessed their guilt before the court next day, they were executed, while Slyboots was promoted to the rank of king's councillor.

Some time afterwards the country was invaded by a foreign king, and Slyboots was sent against the enemy in the field. Then he drew the sword which he had brought from the under-world for the first time, and began to slaughter the hostile army, and soon none were left alive on the bloody field. The king was so pleased at the victory that he made Slyboots his son-in-law.

Jannsen gives an inferior variant of this story under the title of the House-Spirit. Here a little man who creeps from under the stove is permitted by the cook to taste the soup three times running, and every time the pot is emptied. His master tells him to quit his service next morning, and orders the steward to make soup; and the steward knocks down the dwarf with the spoon. Next morning, as the cook is leaving, the dwarf invites him to his house under the stove, and gives him a little box, on which he has only to tap, and ask for whatever he wants. The steward meets the cook, hears the story, puts on soup, and invites the dwarf to partake. In return he receives a box, which he takes to his master, but out of the box jumps a dwarf with

an iron club, who belabours them both till they are nearly dead, and then disappears with the box. The kitchen dwarf was never seen again.

The next story is peculiarly interesting and original. I place it here, because we find three maidens busy spinning for a witch, as the Kalevide found them in the palace of Sarvik.

THE GOLD-SPINNERS.

(KREUTZWALD.)

I AM going to tell you a beautiful story about what happened in the world in ancient days, when the meadows still resounded with the wise sayings of birds and beasts.

Once upon a time a lame old woman lived in a thick forest with her three beautiful daughters in a cottage hidden among the bushes. The three daughters were like three fair flowers, especially the youngest, who was as fair and delicate as a bean-flower, while the mother was like a withered stem. But there was none to look upon them in their loneliness save the sun

by day, and by night the moon and the starry eyes of heaven.

> Hot, like eyes of youthful lovers,
> Shone the sun upon their head-gear,
> Shining on their coloured ribands,
> Turning red their garment's edges.

The old mother did not allow the girls to grow up in idleness, but kept them hard at work from morning to night spinning golden flax into thread. She gave the poor creatures no half-holidays on Thursdays or Saturdays, to provide themselves with anything they needed, and if they had not sometimes taken their needles in their hands by stealth at twilight or by moonlight, they would have possessed nothing. As soon as the distaff was empty, they were immediately furnished with a fresh supply, and the thread was required to be fine and regular. When the thread was finished, the old woman hid it away under lock and key in a secret chamber, where her daughters were never allowed to set foot. The spinners knew not how the golden flax came into the house, nor for what fabric the thread was used, for the mother never

replied to any questions on these subjects. The old woman went off on a journey two or three times every summer, and sometimes stayed away more than a week, but her daughters never knew where she went or what she brought back with her, for she always returned by night. When she was about to start, she always distributed as many days' work to her daughters as she expected to be away.

The time came round again for the old woman to set out on her journey, and she gave out work to the girls for six days, repeating her usual admonition. "Children, do not let your eyes wander, and hold your fingers carefully, that the thread on the reel is not broken, or the glitter of the golden thread will vanish, and with it all your prospects of good fortune." The girls laughed at this impressive warning, and before their mother had hobbled ten steps from the house on her crutches, all three began to make light of it. "There is no need of this useless warning, which is always repeated," said the youngest sister. "The golden threads do not break with picking, much less with spinning." The other sisters added, "It is equally unlikely that

the golden lustre should disappear." The girls often ventured on such jests, but at last, after much merriment, tears rose to their eyes.

On the third day after their mother's departure an unexpected event took place, which at first filled the daughters with alarm, and then with joy and happiness, but which was destined to cause them great trouble for a long time afterwards. A prince of the race of Kalev found himself separated from his companions while hunting in the forest,[1] and wandered so far out of his way that he could no longer hear the barking of the dogs, nor the blowing of the horns to direct him aright. All his shouts met with no response but their own echo, or were lost in the thick bush. At length the prince, tired and disheartened, dismounted from his horse and lay down to rest under a bush, while he allowed his horse to stray about and graze at liberty. When the prince awoke from his sleep, the sun was already low in the heavens. As he was again wandering

[1] "These forests are very useful in delivering princes from their courtiers, like a sieve that keeps back the bran. Then the princes get away to follow their fortunes."—*George MacDonald*, "*The Light Princess.*"

backwards and forwards in search of the right road, he came at length to a small footpath which led him to the cottage of the lame old woman. The daughters were startled when they suddenly saw the stranger appear, whose like they had never before beheld. But they had finished their day's work, and soon made friends with the visitor in the cool evening, feeling no inclination to retire to rest. And even after the elder sisters had lain down to sleep, the youngest still sat on the doorstep with their guest, and no sleep visited their eyes that night.

We will leave the pair to exchange confidences and sweet words in the light of the moon and stars, and will return to the huntsmen who had lost their master in the wood. They searched unweariedly through the whole forest, until the darkness of night put an end to their quest. After this, two men were sent to carry the sad news to the city, while the others camped for the night under a great pine-tree, ready to renew their search next day. The king immediately issued orders that a regiment of horse and a regiment of foot should march out next morning to seek for his lost son. The wood was so long and broad

that the search lasted till the third day, when horse-tracks were at length discovered which they followed till they reached the footpath which led to the cottage. The prince had not found the time pass heavily in company with the maiden, and he was but little disposed to go home. Before he departed, he gave her a secret promise that he would return in a short time, and take her with him, either with good-will or by force, and would make her his bride. But although the elder sisters had heard nothing of the matter, it nevertheless came to light in a way which nobody anticipated.

The youngest daughter was not a little astonished, when she sat down to work after the departure of the prince, to find that the thread on the spool was broken. She pieced the ends together, and set the wheel in rapid motion that she might make up for the time which she had lost with her lover, by diligent labour, but her heart fluttered at a strange and inexplicable event, for the gold thread had lost its former lustre. No terror and no sighs or tears could repair the mischief. According to an old proverb, misfortune springs into the house through the door, enters by the window, and

creeps in through any crevice which is not blocked up; and thus was it now.[1]

The old woman returned home by night; and as soon as she came into the room in the morning, she perceived at once that something was wrong. Her heart was filled with rage, and she called her daughters one by one, and severely cross-questioned them. They could not help themselves with lies and excuses, for lies have short legs, and the cunning old woman soon discovered what the village cock had crowed in her youngest daughter's ear behind her back. Then the old woman began to curse so terribly that it seemed as if she wanted to darken heaven and earth with her imprecations. At last she threatened to break the neck of the young man and give his flesh to the wild beasts to devour if he ever ventured near the house again. The youngest daughter turned as red as a boiled crab, and found no rest by day nor sleep by night; for the thought oppressed her ever, that if the youth should return, he might meet his death. Early in the morning she stole quietly out of the house while her mother and sisters

[1] Compare the scene with the four Grey Women in the second part of *Faust*.

were still asleep, to breathe the freshness of the dewy air. As luck would have it, she had learned the language of birds from her mother when she was still a child, and her knowledge now stood her in good stead. A raven was sitting in the branches of a pine-tree near, preening his feathers, and the maiden called to him, "Dear bird of wisdom, wisest of the race of birds, come to my aid." "What help dost thou need?" answered the raven. The girl answered, "Fly from the wood afar into the country, until you reach a stately city with a royal palace. Endeavour to find the king's son, and warn him of the misfortune which has come upon us." Then she told the raven the whole story, from the breaking of the thread to the terrible threat of her mother, and begged that the youth would never return to the house. The raven promised to deliver her message, if he could find anybody who understood his language, and flew away immediately.

The mother would not allow the youngest daughter to work at the spinning-wheel again, but kept her busy winding the spun thread. This work would have been easier to the maiden than the other, but her mother's incessant cursing and

scolding gave her no rest from morning to night. Any attempt to palliate her offence only made matters worse. If a woman's heart overflows with anger and loosens her tongue, no power on earth can stay it.

Towards evening the voice of the raven was heard croaking on the summit of the pine-tree, and the tortured girl hurried out to inquire what news he brought. The raven had had the good fortune to meet with the son of a magician in the garden of the king, who perfectly understood the language of birds. To him the bird delivered the message of the maiden, and besought him to convey it to the prince. "Tell the raven," said the prince to the magician's son, "that he must return, and say to the maiden, 'Sleep not on the ninth night, for a deliverer will then appear to rescue the chick from the claws of the hawk.'" They gave the raven a piece of meat as a reward for his message and to strengthen his wings, and then sent him back again. The maiden thanked the bird for his news, but concealed his message carefully in her own bosom, so that the others heard nothing of it. But as the ninth day approached her heart grew ever heavier, for she dreaded

lest some unexpected mischance might yet ruin all.

When the ninth night came, and the mother and daughters had retired to rest, the youngest sister stole from the house on tip-toe, and sat down on the grass under a tree to wait for her lover. Her heart was full of mingled hope and fear. The cock had already crowed twice, but there was not a step nor a voice to be heard in the wood. But between the second and third cockcrow she heard the distant sound of horses' hoofs. Guided by the sound, she made her way in their direction, lest the noise of their approach should rouse the sleeping household. She soon caught sight of the troop of soldiers, at whose head rode the prince himself, guiding them by the secret marks he had made on the trees when he departed. As soon as he perceived the maiden, he sprang from his horse, lifted her into the saddle, seated himself before her, so that she could cling to him, and then hastened homewards. The moon shone so brightly between the trees that the soldiers could not miss the track. Presently the birds roused up, and began to chirp and twitter in the dawning light. And if the maiden had had time to listen to their

warnings, they would have profited her more than the honeyed words of her lover, which were all that reached her ear. But she saw and heard nothing but the voice of her lover, who bade her dismiss all idle fears, and to trust in the protection of the soldiers. The sun was already high in the heavens when they left the forest and emerged into the open country. Fortunately the old mother did not discover her daughter's flight very early in the morning. It was only when she found that the twists of thread had not been wound that she asked what had become of the youngest sister, but no one could inform her. There were many indications to show that she had fled, and the mother immediately devised a crafty plan to punish the fugitive. She went out and gathered a handful of nine[1] different sorts of magic herbs, scattered charmed salt over them, and tied up the whole in a bundle. Then she muttered curses and imprecations over the witch-packet, and cast it to the winds, saying—

"Lend the ball thy wings, O whirlwind!
Mother of the wind, thy pinions;
Drive the witch's bundle onward,

[1] Nine is a mystical number as well as seven.

Let it fly with wind-like swiftness,
Let it scatter death around it,
Let it cast disease beyond it."

Somewhat before noon the prince and his army arrived on the bank of a broad river, over which a narrow bridge had been thrown, which only permitted the soldiers to pass one by one. The prince was just riding on the middle of the bridge, when the witch's bundle came flying along, borne by the wind, and attacked his horse like a gad-fly. The horse snorted with terror, reared up on his hind-legs, and before any help could be given, the maiden slid from the saddle and fell head-long into the river. The prince would have leaped in after her, but the soldiers seized hold of him and prevented him, for the river was of un-fathomable depth, and no human aid could avail to remedy the misfortune which had happened.

The prince was almost distracted with grief and horror, and the soldiers forced him to accompany them home against his will. He lay in a quiet room for weeks mourning over the calamity, and at first refused all food and drink. The king summoned magicians from all quarters, but none of them could discover the nature of the disease

or suggest any remedy. But one day the son of the wind-sorcerer, who was one of the labourers in the king's garden, advised, "Send to Finland for the oldest of all magicians, for he is wiser than the magicians of our country."

When the king heard this, he sent a messenger to the old Finnish sorcerer, who arrived after a week on the wings of the wind. He spoke thus to the king: "Mighty king, the disease which afflicts the prince is caused by the wind. An evil witch-packet has robbed the prince of the half of his heart, and therefore he suffers unceasingly. Send him often into the wind that the wind may bear away his sorrows into the forest."

He was not wrong, for the health of the prince soon began to improve, his appetite grew better, and he was able to sleep at night. At last he confided the sorrow of his heart to his parents, and his father wished him to seek out another young bride to lead home; but the prince would not listen to the proposal.

The young man had already passed a year in mourning, when one day he happened to come to the bridge where he had lost his betrothed, and bitter tears rose to his eyes at the recollection.

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Suddenly he heard a sweet voice singing, although no living creature was in sight. And the voice sang:

"By the mother's curse o'ertaken,
Sank in flood the hapless maiden,
In the watery grave the fair one,
And in Ahti's[1] waves thy darling."

The prince dismounted from his horse, and looked round everywhere to see whether some one might not be hidden under the bridge, but he could see no singer anywhere. The only object visible was a water-lily, swaying on the water amid its broad leaves. But a swaying flower could not sing, and there must be something mysterious about it. He tied his horse to a stump on the bank, and sat down on the bridge to listen, hoping that his eyes or ears would give him some solution of the riddle. All was still for a while, but presently the invisible singer sang again:

"By the mother's curse o'ertaken,
Sank in flood the hapless maiden,
In the watery grave the fair one,
And in Ahti's waves thy darling."

Sometimes the wind brings a fortunate idea to

[1] Ahti, the God of the Waters.

men, and such was the case now. The prince thought, "If I rode alone to the cottage in the wood, who knows but that the gold-spinners might be able to give me some explanation of this wonderful occurrence." He mounted his horse and rode towards the forest. He hoped to find his way easily by the former indications, but the wood had grown, and he rode for more than one day before he could discover the footpath. When he drew near the cottage, he stopped and waited, hoping that one of the maidens would come out. Early in the morning the eldest sister came out to wash her face at the spring. The young man went to her, and told her of the misfortune that had happened on the bridge the year before, and of the song which he had heard there a day or two ago. It happened that the old mother was absent from home, and the maiden invited the prince into the house. As soon as the two girls heard his story, they knew that the misfortune must have been caused by their mother's witch's coil, and that their sister was not dead, but only enchanted. The eldest sister inquired, "Did you see nothing on the surface of the water from whence the song might have proceeded?" "Nothing," replied the

prince. "As far as my eyes could reach, nothing could be perceived on the surface of the water but a yellow water-lily surrounded by its broad leaves; but leaves and flowers cannot sing." The maidens immediately suspected that the water-lily could be nothing but their sister, who had fallen into the water, and had been changed into a flower by enchantment. They knew that their old mother had let fly the witch's coil after the maiden, with her curse, and that if it had not killed her, it might have transformed her into any shape. But they would not tell the prince of their suspicions until they could devise some means for their sister's release, lest they might inspire him with fruitless hopes. As they did not expect their mother to return home for some days, there was plenty of time to consider the best course to adopt.

In the evening the eldest sister gathered a sufficient quantity of various magic herbs, which she rubbed with flour into a dough; and baked a pie which she gave to the young man to eat before he retired to rest at night. During the night the prince had a wonderful dream. He thought that he was in the wood among the birds, and that he could understand the

language of them all. In the morning he related his dream to the maidens, and the eldest sister observed, "You have come to us at a fortunate hour, and you have had your dream at a fortunate hour, for it will be fulfilled on your way home. The pork pie which I baked for your welfare yesterday, and gave you to eat, was mixed with magic herbs which will enable you to understand everything which the knowing birds say to one another. These little feathered people are gifted with much wisdom which is unknown to mankind. Turn a sharp ear to whatever their beaks may utter. And when your own time of trouble is over, do not forget us poor children, who sit here at the spinning-wheel as if in an eternal prison."

The prince thanked the maidens for their kindness, and promised to do his best to release them, either by ransom or by force. He then took leave of them and turned his way homewards. The maidens were pleased to find that the threads were not broken, and still retained their golden lustre, so that their mother would have no cause to reproach them when she returned.

The prince found his ride through the wood

still more pleasant. He seemed to be surrounded with a numerous company, for the singing and chirping of the birds sounded like articulate words to his ears. He was greatly surprised to find how much wisdom is lost to men who do not understand the language of birds. At first the wanderer was not able to understand clearly what the feathered people were saying, for they were talking of the affairs of various persons who were unknown to him; but suddenly he saw a magpie and a thrush sitting in a tall pine-tree, who were talking about himself.

"How great is the stupidity of men!" said the thrush. "They cannot rightly comprehend the most trifling matter. For a whole year the foster-child of a lame old woman has been sitting near the bridge in the form of a water-lily, lamenting her sad fate in song, but no one has been able to release her. A few days ago her lover was riding over the bridge, and heard her melancholy song, but he was no wiser than anybody else." The magpie answered, "And yet the maiden was punished by her mother on his account. Unless he is gifted with greater wisdom that falls to the lot of men, she must remain a flower for ever." "It would be a trifling matter

to release the maiden," said the thrush, "if the matter were fully explained to the old magician of Finland. He could easily deliver her from her watery prison and flowery bondage."

This conversation made the young man thoughtful, and as he rode on, he began to consider what messenger he could send to Finland. Presently he heard one swallow say to another over his head, "Let us go to Finland, where we can build our nests better than here."

"Stay, friends," cried the prince in the language of the birds. "Please to convey a thousand compliments from me to the old sorcerer of Finland, and ask him to give me directions how to restore a maiden who has been transformed into a water-lily to her original form." The swallows promised to fulfil his request, and flew away.

When he came to the bank of the river, he allowed his horse to graze, and remained standing on the bridge, to listen whether he could not hear the song again. But all was still, and he could hear nothing but the rushing of the waters and the sighing of the wind. At last he mounted his horse unwillingly and rode home, but did not

say a word to any one of his excursion and his adventure.

He was sitting in the garden a week afterwards, and thinking that the swallows must have forgotten his message, when a great eagle circled above him high in the air. The bird gradually descended, and at length alighted on the branch of a lime-tree near the prince, and thus addressed him: "I bring you greetings from the old sorcerer in Finland, who hopes that you will not think ill of him that he did not reply to your message sooner, for he could not find a messenger who was coming this way. It is a very simple matter to disenchant the maiden. You have only to go to the bank of the river, throw off your clothes, and smear yourself all over with mud till not a speck remains white. Then take the tip of your nose between your fingers, and say, 'Let the man become a crayfish.' Immediately you will become a crayfish, when you can descend into the river without any fear of being drowned. Squeeze yourself boldly under the roots of the water-lily, and clear them from mud and reeds, so that no portion remains fixed. Then grasp one of the roots with your pincers, and the water will raise you with the flower to the surface. Allow

yourself to drift with the stream till you see a rowan-tree[1] with leafy branches on the left bank. Near the rowan-tree is a rock about as high as a small bath-house. When you reach the rock you must say, 'Let the water-lily become a maiden and the crayfish a man!' and it will be accomplished immediately." When the eagle had delivered his message, he spread his wings, and flew away. The young man looked after him for a time, not knowing what to think of the whole affair.

A week passed by, and found him still undecided, for he had neither courage nor confidence sufficient to undertake such an enterprise. At length a crow said to him, "Why do you neglect to follow the old man's advice? The old sorcerer has never given false information, and the language of birds never deceives. Hasten to the river, and let the maiden dry your tears of longing." This gave the young man courage, for he reflected, "Nothing worse can befall me but death, and death is easier than constant weeping." He mounted his horse and took the well-known path to the banks of the

[1] A sacred tree in Eastern Europe, as it is in the British Isles.

river. When he came to the bridge, he could distinguish the song:

"By my mother's curse o'ertaken,
Here I lie in slumber sunken;
Here the youthful maid must languish
On the bosom of the waters,
And the bed is cold and oozy
Where the tender maid is resting."

The prince dismounted, and hobbled his horse to prevent him from straying too far from the bridge. Then he took off his clothes, and smeared himself over and over with mud, so that no spot remained white. After this, he caught hold of the end of his nose, and jumped into the water, exclaiming, "Let the man become a crayfish." There was a splash in the water, and then everything became as still as before.

The prince, now transformed into a crayfish, immediately began to disentangle the roots of the water-lily from the bed of the river, but it took him a long time. The roots were firmly fixed in the sand and mud, so that the crayfish had to work for seven whole days before he could complete his task. Then he seized one of the rootlets with his pincers, and the water

buoyed him up to the surface with the flower. They drifted along slowly with the current, but although there were plenty of trees and bushes on the banks, it was some time before the prince caught sight of the rowan-tree and the rock. At last, however, he spied the tree with its leaves and clusters of red berries on the left bank, and a little farther on stood the rock, which was as high as a small bath-house. Upon this he cried out, "Let the water-lily become a maiden and the crayfish a man." Then the youth and the maiden swam with their heads above the water. The water bore them to the bank, but they were both mother-naked, as God had created them.

Then said the shame-faced maiden, "Dear youth, I have no clothes to put on, and cannot come out of the water." But the prince answered, "Go ashore near the rowan-tree, and I will shut my eyes while you climb up and hide yourself under the tree. Then I will hurry to the bridge where I left my horse and my clothes when I plunged into the river." So the maiden hid herself under the tree, while the prince hurried to the spot where he had left his horse and his

clothes, but he could find neither one nor the other. He did not know that he had passed so many days in the form of a crayfish, and supposed that he had only spent a few hours in the water. Presently he saw a magnificent chariot with six horses coming slowly along the bank to meet him. In the chariot he found everything needful both for himself and for the maiden whom he had released from her watery prison, as well as an attendant and a lady's maid. The prince kept the attendant with him, but sent the chariot and the maid with the clothes to the spot where his naked darling was waiting under the rowan-tree. Rather more than an hour elapsed before the coach returned, bringing the maiden attired as a royal bride to the spot where the prince was waiting. He also was richly dressed in wedding robes, and seated himself by her side in the chariot. They drove straight to the city, and stopped before the door of the church. In the church sat the king and queen in black garments, mourning for the loss of their beloved son, who was supposed to have been drowned in the river, for his horse and his clothes had been found on the bank. Great was their joy

when their lost son appeared before them, accompanied by a beautiful girl, both in wedding attire. The king himself led them to the altar, and they were married. Then a wedding-feast was prepared, which lasted for six whole weeks.

But there is no peace nor rest in the course of time, for days of happiness appear to pass more quickly than hours of trouble. Soon after the wedding, autumn set in, followed by frost and snow, and the young couple did not feel much inclination to leave the house. But when spring returned, the prince and his young consort went to walk in the garden. There they heard a magpie crying out from the summit of a tree, "O what an ungrateful creature to neglect the friends who have helped him so much, in his days of happiness! Must the two poor girls sit spinning gold thread all their lives? The lame old woman is not the mother of the maidens, but a wicked witch who stole them away from a far country when they were children. The old woman has committed many crimes, and deserves no mercy. Let her be punished with boiled hemlock, or she will perhaps direct another witch's coil against the child who has been rescued."

This reminded the prince of all that had happened, and he told his consort how he had gone to the cottage in the wood to ask the advice of her sisters, and how the maidens had taught him the language of birds, and he had promised to release them from their servitude. His wife begged him with tears in her eyes to go to the aid of her sisters. When they awoke next morning, she said, "I had an important dream last night. I dreamed that the old mother had left the house, and that the girls were alone. No doubt this would be a good opportunity to go to their aid."

The prince immediately equipped a troop of soldiers, and led them to the cottage in the wood, where they arrived on the following day. The maidens were alone, as the dream had foreshadowed, and ran out with joyful cries to meet their deliverers. A soldier was ordered to gather hemlock-roots, and to boil them for the punishment of the old woman, so that she should need no more food if she came home, and ate a sufficiency of them. They passed the night in the cottage, and on the following morning set out early on the road with the maidens, so that they reached the town in the evening. Great was the joy of the

sisters, who had not seen each other for two years.

The old woman returned home the same night, and greedily devoured the food which she found on the table. Then she crept into bed to rest, but she never awoke again, for the hemlock put an end to her wicked life. A week later the prince sent a trusty captain to see how things were going on, when he found the old woman dead. Fifty loads of golden thread were found in the secret chamber, and were divided among the sisters. As soon as the treasure was carried away, the captain sent the red cock on the roof.[1] But while the cock was already stretching his red comb out of the smoke-hole, a great cat with fiery eyes clambered down the wall from the roof. The soldiers chased the cat, and soon caught her, when a bird sang from the summit of a tree, "Fix the cat in a trap by her tail, and all will come to light." The men obeyed.

"Don't torture me, good people," said the cat. "I am a human being like yourselves, and have been changed into the shape of a cat by witchcraft, though it was a just return for my wickedness.

[1] See page 108.

I was the housekeeper in the palace of a great king a long way from here, and the old woman was the queen's first chambermaid. We were led by avarice to plot together secretly to steal the king's three daughters and a great treasure, and then to make our escape. After we had contrived to make away with all the golden vessels, which the old woman changed into golden flax, we took the children, when the eldest was three years old, and the youngest six months. The old woman was afraid that I might repent and change my intentions, so she transformed me into a cat. Her death loosed my tongue, but I did not recover my former shape." When the captain heard this, he answered, "You deserve no better fate than the old woman," and ordered her to be thrown into the fire.

It was not long before the two elder princesses married kings' sons, like their youngest sister, and the golden thread which they had spun in the cottage in the wood provided them with rich dowries. But they never discovered their parents, nor the place of their birth. It was reported that the old woman had buried many more loads of golden thread in the ground, but no one could find the spot.

SECTION II

ORPHAN AND FOUNDLING STORIES

THE Esthonians appear to be very compassionate towards orphans, for many of their tales relate to the adventures of neglected or ill-used orphan children, and the wonderful events by which their welfare was finally secured. Nevertheless, wicked stepmothers and farmers' wives are just as common as in other folk-tales.

The first story of this class which we have selected, "The Wood of Tontla,"[1] is specially interesting from its resemblance to Tieck's well-known German story of "The Elves," which must originally have been derived from the same source as the present narrative.

With the Orphan Stories proper I have placed others relating to stolen or friendless children.

[1] *Tont* is a common name for a house-spirit.

THE WOOD OF TONTLA.

(KREUTZWALD.)

IN ancient times there was a beautifully wooded region in Alutaga (north of Lake Peipus), which was called the Wood of Tontla. But no one dared to enter it, and those who had chanced to approach it related that they had seen an old tumbledown house through the thick trees, surrounded by creatures of human appearance, with which the grass swarmed like an anthill. These forms were ragged and dusky, and looked like gipsies, and there were many old women and half-naked children among them. A peasant who had wandered rather deeper into the wood than usual, as he was returning home one dark night after a carouse, beheld a strange sight. A number of women and children were gathered round a bright fire, and some were sitting on the ground while others danced. An old woman held a broad iron shovel in her hand, and every now and then scattered the red hot cinders over the grass, when the children flew up into the air, fluttering about like owls in the rising smoke, and then sinking

down again. Then a little old man with a long beard came out of the wood, carrying a sack longer than himself. The women and children shouted out, and ran to meet him, dancing round him, and trying to pull the sack off his back; but the old man shook himself free. After this, a black cat as large as a foal, which had been sitting on the doorstep glaring with fiery eyes, leaped upon the old man's sack, and then disappeared in the cottage. But as the spectator's head ached and everything swam before his eyes, his report was not clear, and people could not quite distinguish between the false and the true. It was remarkable that such stories were repeated about the Wood of Tontla from generation to generation, without anybody being able to give a more definite account of it. The King of Sweden more than once ordered the wood to be felled, but the people did not venture to execute his command. One day a rash man struck his axe into a tree, when blood flowed, and a cry was heard as of a man in pain.[1] The terrified woodcutter fled, shaking all over with fear; and after this, no command was so stringent

[1] Talking trees are common in Esthonian tales; I do not remember another instance of bleeding trees.

and no reward great enough, to induce a wood-cutter to touch the wood of Tontla. It was also very strange that no paths led either into or out of the wood, and that throughout the year no smoke was seen to rise which might indicate the presence of human dwellings. The wood was not large, and it was surrounded by open fields, so that it lay exposed to the view of all. If living creatures had actually dwelt there from olden times, they could only get in and out of the wood by secret subterranean passages; or else they must fly through the air by night, like witches, when all around were asleep. According to tradition, the latter alternative seemed the most probable. Perhaps we shall learn more about these strange birds if we drive on the carriage of the story a little farther, and rest at the next village.

There was a large village a few versts from the Wood of Tontla, where a peasant who had lately been left a widower had married a young wife, and, as often happens, he brought a regular shrew into the house, so that there was no end to the trouble and quarrelling.

The first wife had left a clever and intelligent

girl named Elsie,[1] who was now seven years old. The wicked stepmother made the poor child's life more intolerable than hell; she banged and cuffed her from morning to night, and gave her worse food than the dogs. As the woman was mistress in the house, the father could not protect his daughter, and even the smoke of the house was forced to dance to the woman's tune. Elsie had now endured this miserable life for more than two years, and had shed many tears, when she went out one Sunday with the other village children to pluck berries. They strolled about as children do, till they came accidentally to the borders of the Wood of Tontla, where the grass was quite red with the finest strawberries. The children ate the sweet berries, and gathered as many as they could into their baskets, when all at once one of the older boys recognised the dreaded spot and cried out, "Fly, fly, for we are in the Wood of Tontla!" The wood was more dreaded than thunder and lightning, and the children rushed off as if all the monsters of the wood were close upon their heels. But Elsie, who had gone rather farther than the others, and had found some very

[1] Else.

fine strawberries under the trees, went on plucking them, although she heard the boy shout. She only thought, "The dwellers in the Tontla Wood cannot be worse than my stepmother at home."

Presently a little black dog with a silver bell hung round its neck ran up to her barking. This brought a little girl dressed in fine silken garments to the spot, who quieted the dog, and said to Elsie, "It is a good thing that you did not run away like the other children. Stay with me for company, and we will play very nice games together, and go to pluck berries every day. My mother will not refuse her consent, if I ask her. Come, and we will go to her at once." Then the beautiful strange child seized Elsie by the hand, and led her deeper into the wood. The little black dog barked for pleasure now, and jumped upon Elsie and licked her hand as if she were an old acquaintance.

O what wonders and magnificence made Elsie open her eyes! She thought herself in heaven. A beautiful garden lay before her, filled with trees and bushes laden with fruit; birds were sitting on the branches, more brightly coloured than the most brilliant butterflies, and decked with feathers of

gold and silver. And the birds were not shy, but allowed the children to take them in their hands at pleasure. In the midst of the garden stood the dwelling-house, built of glass and precious stones, so that the roof and walls shone like the sun. A lady clad in beautiful robes sat on a bench before the door, and asked her daughter, "Who is this guest you have brought with you?" Her daughter answered, "I found her alone in the wood, and brought her with me for company. Won't you allow her to stay here?" The mother smiled, but did not speak, and scanned Elsie sharply from head to foot. Then she told Elsie to come nearer, patted her cheek, and asked in a friendly way where she lived, whether her parents were still alive, and if she would like to stay here. Elsie kissed the lady's hand and fell down and embraced her knees, and then answered, weeping, "My mother has long been at rest under the turf—

> "My mother was borne to the grave,
> And none left to comfort or save.

"It is true that my father still lives, but this is small comfort to me when my stepmother hates me, and beats me unmercifully every day. I cannot

do anything to please her. O my dearest lady, let me stay here! Let me mind the flocks, or set me to any other work and I will do anything, and will be always obedient to you, but don't send me back to my stepmother. She would beat me almost to death, because I did not go back with the other village children." The lady smiled, and answered, "We will see what we can do for you." Then she rose from the bench and went into the house. Meantime the daughter said to Elsie, "Take comfort, for my mother is friendly to you. I can see in her face that she will consent to our wishes as soon as she has had time to think over the matter." She then followed her mother into the house, leaving Elsie waiting outside. Elsie's heart palpitated with hope and fear, and she waited anxiously for the decision which was to be announced to her.

After a time the daughter came out again with a box of toys in her hand, and said, "My mother says we are to play together while she considers what is to be done about you. I hope you will stay here, for I don't want to let you leave me again. Have you been for a row on the lake?" Elsie stared, and asked, "On the lake! What is

that? I never heard anything about it." "You'll see presently," said the young lady, taking off the lid of the box. It contained a leaf of lady's-smock, a mussel-shell, and two fish-bones. There were a few drops of water glittering on the leaf, which the girl threw on the grass. Immediately the grass, the garden, and everything else vanished, as if they had sunk in the ground, and water spread around to the horizon in every direction. Only a small patch remained dry under the feet of the children. Then the young lady set the shell in the water, and took the fish-bones in her hand. The shell began to expand, until it became a pretty boat, in which a dozen children or more could easily have found room. The two seated themselves in it, Elsie not without hesitation, but her companion only laughed, and the fish-bones turned to oars in her hands. The children were rocked by the waves as if they were in a cradle, and presently other boats came in sight, and the people in them were laughing and singing. "We should sing back to them," said the young lady; but Elsie did not know how to sing; so she herself began to sing very sweetly. Elsie could not understand much of what the others sang, but

she heard the word Kiisike[1] repeated several times, and asked what it meant, and her companion answered, "That is my name." They floated thus together for a long time, till they heard a voice crying, "Come home, children, for it is nearly evening." Kiisike took the box out of her pocket, and dipped the leaf in the water, so that a few drops lay upon it. Instantly they found themselves in the garden near the beautiful house: everything looked as firm and solid as before, and no water was to be seen anywhere. The shell and fish-bones were put back into the box with the leaf, and the children went home.

Here they saw four-and-twenty ladies sitting round a dinner-table, all splendidly dressed as if for a wedding. The lady of the house sat at the head of the table in a golden chair.

Elsie's eyes did not know how to admire sufficiently all the splendour which surrounded her. Thirteen gold and silver dishes stood upon the table, but one of these was taken up and carried away without the cover having been removed. Elsie ate of the dainty dishes, which were nicer than cakes, and again she thought she must be in

[1] Pussy.

heaven, for she could not imagine anything like this on earth.

During dinner, conversation was carried on in low tones, but in a foreign language of which Elsie did not understand a word.[1] At length the lady spoke to a maid who stood behind her chair. The latter went out, and soon returned accompanied by a little old man, whose beard was longer than himself.[2] The old man made a bow, and stood waiting at the door. The lady pointed to Elsie, and said, "Look at this little peasant girl; I am going to adopt her as my foster-child. Make me an image of her, which we can send to the village to-morrow in her stead." The old man looked at Elsie sharply, as if to take her measure, bowed to the lady again, and left the room. After dinner the lady said kindly to Elsie, "Kiisike has asked me to keep you here as a companion for her, and you said yourself that you would like to stay with us.

[1] It must be remembered that the dominant race in Esthonia is German, and that the gentry, even if not fairies, would be expected to speak a language unintelligible to the people. It is significant that the very word for lady in Esthonian is *prowa*, a corruption of *Frau*. Everything particularly fine is called "Saxon."

[2] In some countries the beard is regarded as a symbol of power, as well as of age and wisdom. Compare the account of Schaibar in the story of Prince Ahmed (*Thousand and One Nights*).

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Is this really so?" Elsie fell on her knees, and kissed the hands and feet of the lady in gratitude for her deliverance from her cruel stepmother. But the lady raised her from the ground, stroked her head and her tearful cheeks, and said, "If you are always a good and diligent child, it shall fare well with you. I will take care of you, and you shall be carefully instructed in everything useful till you are grown up, and are able to shift for yourself. My governess, who teaches Kiisike, shall teach you all kinds of fine work, and other things besides."

After a time the old man came back with a long trough on his shoulder filled with clay, and a covered basket in his left hand. He set them down on the ground, and took a piece of clay, which he moulded into a doll. The body was hollow, and he put three salt herrings and a bit of bread into it. Then he made a hole in the breast of the doll, took a black snake a yard long from the basket, and made it creep through. The snake hissed and lashed its tail as if it resisted, but he forced it through the hole. After the lady had carefully inspected the doll on all sides, the old man said, "We want nothing more

now but a drop of the peasant girl's blood." Elsie turned pale with terror when she heard this, for she thought that her soul was sold to the Evil One. But the lady comforted her and said, "Fear nothing. We don't want your blood for any evil purpose, but for a good end, and for your future happiness." Then she took a small gold needle, and pricked Elsie's arm, after which she gave the needle to the old man, who thrust it into the heart of the doll. Then he put the doll into the basket to grow, and promised to show the lady the result of his work next morning. Then they retired to rest, and a chambermaid showed Elsie to a room where she found a soft bed ready for her. When she opened her eyes next morning in the silken bed with soft pillows, she found herself wearing a shift of fine linen, and she saw rich garments lying on a chair near the bed. Then a girl came into the room, and told Elsie to wash herself and comb her hair, after which she dressed her from head to foot in the fine new clothes, like the proudest Saxon child.[1] Nothing delighted Elsie so much as the

[1] The Germans are generally represented in Esthonian tales as rich, and sometimes as very haughty people.

shoes,[1] for until now she had always gone barefoot. Elsie thought that no king's daughter could possess the like. She was so delighted with the shoes that she had no time to admire the rest of her outfit, although everything was beautiful. The poor clothes which she had worn had been removed during the night, for a purpose which she was afterwards to discover. They were put on the doll, which was to be sent to the village in her place. The doll had grown in its case during the night, and had now become a perfect image of Elsie, and ran about like a creature which God had made. Elsie was startled when she saw the doll, which looked exactly like what she herself had been yesterday. When the lady saw Elsie's alarm, she said, "Don't be afraid, child. This clay image cannot do you any harm, and we will send it to your stepmother, for her to beat. She may beat it as much as she likes, for the image is as hard as stone, and cannot feel pain. But if the wicked woman does not alter her conduct, your image will some day punish her as she deserves."

[1] Compare *Goody Two-Shoes;* but this is a modern tale, believed to have been written by Goldsmith.

After this, Elsie lived as happily as any spoiled Saxon child which is rocked in a golden cradle. She had neither sorrow nor weariness to suffer; her lessons became easier and easier every day, and her hard life in the village seemed now no more than a bad dream. But the more happiness she found in this new life, the more wonderful everything appeared to her. It could not be natural, and some mysterious power must rule over everything here. A rock of granite stood in the enclosure about twenty paces from the house. When meal-time approached, the old man with the long beard went to the rock, drew a silver wand from his bosom, and struck the rock three times, when it gave out a clear sound. Then a large golden cock sprang out, and perched upon the rock; and as often as he clapped his wings and crowed, something came out of the rock. First came a long table with covers ready laid for all the company, and the table moved into the house of itself, as if on the wings of the wind. When the cock crowed a second time, chairs went after the table, followed by one dish after another. Everything leaped out of the rock, and flew like the wind to the table. It was the same with

bottles of mead and apples and pears; everything seemed alive, so that no one needed to fetch and carry anything. When everybody had eaten enough, the old man knocked on the rock a second time with his silver wand, and then the golden cock crowed, and the bottles, dishes, plates, chairs, and table went back into the rock. But when the thirteenth dish came, from which nothing was eaten, a great black cat ran after it, and sat on the rock with the cock, till the old man carried them away. He took the dish in his hand, the cat on his arm, and the golden cock on his shoulder, and disappeared with them under the rock. Not only food and drink, but everything else required for the household, and even clothes, came out of the rock upon the crowing of the cock. Although but little conversation was carried on at table, and even that in a foreign language, the lady and the governess talked and sang a great deal in the house and garden. In time Elsie also learned to understand almost everything, but years elapsed before she could attempt to speak the strange language herself. One day Elsie asked Kiisike why the thirteenth dish came table every day, although nobody ate anything to from it; but Kiisike could not tell her. However,

she must have asked her mother, who sent for Elsie a few days afterwards, and talked to her very seriously. "Do not vex your soul with useless curiosity. You would like to know why we never eat from the thirteenth dish? Mark well, dear child; this is the dish of hidden blessing. We dare not touch it, or our happy life would come to an end. It would be much better, too, for men in this world if they did not grasp avariciously after all things without returning anything in gratitude to the Heavenly Dispenser. Avarice is the worst fault of mankind."[1]

The years flew by with arrow-like swiftness, and Elsie had now become a blooming maiden, and had learned many things which would never have become known to her during her whole life, if she had lived in the village. But Kiisike remained the same little child as on the day when she first met Elsie in the wood. The governess who lived

[1] There is a story (French, I think) of a king who overheard a poor man and his wife abusing Adam and Eve for their poverty. The king took them home, and entertained them. They had a grand feast of many covers every day, but there was always one, the largest of all, which they were forbidden to open. The wife soon persuaded her husband to do so, when a mouse ran out, and the king turned them out of doors.

in the house with the lady instructed Kiisike and Elsie for some hours daily in reading and writing, and in all kinds of fine work. Elsie learned everything easily, but Kiisike had more taste for childish games than for her lessons. When the whim took her, she threw her work away, caught up her little box, and ran out of doors to play on the lake, and nobody scolded her. Sometimes she said to Elsie, "It's a pity you've grown so big: you can't play with me any longer."

Nine years passed in this way, and one evening the lady sent for Elsie to come to her room. This surprised Elsie, for the lady had never sent for her before; and her heart beat almost to bursting. When Elsie entered, she saw that the lady's cheeks were red, and her eyes were filled with tears, which she hastily wiped away as if to hide them. "My dear child," said the lady, "the time has come when we must part." "Part!" exclaimed Elsie, throwing herself at the lady's feet. "No, dear lady, we must never part till death shall separate us. I have always behaved well; don't drive me from you." But the lady said soothingly, "Calm yourself, child. You do not yet know how much it will increase your happiness. You are now grown up, and I

must not keep you here any longer in confinement. You must go back among mankind, where happiness awaits you." Elsie still besought her, "Dear lady, don't send me away; I wish for no other happiness than to live and die with you. Let me be your chambermaid, or give me any other work to do that you like, only don't send me out into the wide world again. It would have been better for you to have left me with my stepmother in the village than for me to have spent so many years in heaven only to be thrust out again into hell." "Be still, dear child," said the lady. "You cannot understand what it is my duty to do for your good, hard as it is for me also. But everything must be done as I direct. You are a child of mortal man,[1] and your years must come at length to an end, and therefore you cannot remain here any longer. I myself and those around me possess human forms, but we are not human beings like you, but beings of a higher order, whom you cannot comprehend. You will find a beloved husband

[1] This expression shows the late date of the present story, for no people uninfluenced by the modern Christian notion that all reasoning beings except men must be necessarily angels or devils, and therefore immortal, represent superhuman beings as immortal, with the exception of the gods, and not always even these.

far away from here, who is destined for you, and you will live happily with him, until your days draw to a close. It is not easy for me to part with you, but so it must be, and therefore you must also submit quietly." Then she passed her golden comb through Elsie's hair and told her to go to bed. But how should poor Elsie sleep this unhappy night? Her life seemed like a dark starless night-sky.

We will leave Elsie in her trouble, and go to the village to see what is taking place at her father's house, to which the clay image was sent for the stepmother to beat in Elsie's stead. It is well known that a wicked woman does not improve with age. It sometimes happens that a wild youth becomes a quiet lamb in his old age; but if a girl whose heart is bad assumes the matron's cap, she becomes like a raging wolf in her old days. The stepmother tortured the clay image like a firebrand from hell both day and night, but she could not hurt the impassive creature, whose body was impervious to pain. If the husband endeavoured to protect his child, she beat him too, as a reward for his attempts at peacemaking. One day the stepmother had again

beaten her clay daughter terribly, and threatened to kill her. In her fury she seized the clay image by the throat with both hands, and was going to strangle it, when a black snake glided hissing from the child's mouth and bit the stepmother in the tongue, so that she fell dead without uttering a sound. When the husband returned home in the evening, he found the dead and swollen body of his wife lying on the floor, but his daughter was nowhere to be found. He cried out, and some of the villagers assembled. They had heard a great noise in the house about noon, but as this was an almost daily occurrence, no one had gone in. In the afternoon all was quiet, but no one had seen the daughter. The body of the dead woman was washed and shrouded, and peas were boiled in salt for those who should watch the dead during the night.[1] The weary man went to his room to rest, and sincerely thanked his stars that he was rid of this firebrand from hell. He found three salt herrings and a piece of bread on the table, which he ate, and then went to bed. Next morning he was found dead in bed, with his body swollen up like that of the woman. A few days

[1] See page 157.

afterwards they were carried to the grave, where they could do each other no more harm. The peasants troubled themselves no further concerning the vanished daughter.

Elsie did not close her eyes all night. She wept and lamented the necessity of parting with her happiness so soon and so unexpectedly. In the morning the lady placed a gold seal-ring on Elsie's finger, and hung a small golden casket round her neck. Then she called the old man, pointed to Elsie with her hand, and took leave of her in the same gesture. Elsie was just going to thank her for her kindness, when the old man touched her head gently three times with his silver wand. Elsie felt immediately that she was changed into a bird. Her arms became wings, and her legs became eagle's legs with long claws, and her nose became a curved beak, while feathers covered her whole body. Then she rose up suddenly into the air, and soared away below the clouds like an eagle hatched from the egg. She flew southwards thus for several days, and would gladly have rested sometimes when her wings grew weary, but she felt no hunger. It came to pass one day that she was flying above a low wood where dogs were

barking, which could not harm the bird, for they had no wings. All at once she felt her feathers pierced through with a sharp arrow, and she fell to the ground and fainted with terror.

When Elsie awoke from her swoon and opened her eyes wide, she found herself lying under a bush in her human shape. How she came there, and all the other strange events which had happened to her, lay behind her like a dream. Presently a handsome young prince rode up, sprang from his horse, and gave his hand kindly to Elsie, saying, "By good fortune I rode here this morning. I have dreamed, dear lady, every night for the last half-year that I should find you here in the wood. Although I have ridden this way to no purpose more than a hundred times, my longing and my hopes were not extinguished. I shot a great eagle to-day, which must have fallen here, and I went to seek the game, and instead of the eagle I found —you!" Then he helped Elsie to mount the horse, and rode with her to the town, where the old king gave her a friendly reception. A few days afterwards they prepared a splendid wedding; and on the wedding morning fifty loads of treasure arrived, which had been sent by Elsie's dear foster-mother.

After the old king's death, Elsie became queen, and in her old age she herself related the adventures of her youth. But since that time no one has ever seen or heard any more of the Wood of Tontla.

The King of the Misty Hill (Kreutzwald) is a somewhat similar, but very inferior story. A girl who is out in a wood all night sees a fire on a hill, and finds an old man standing by it. He had a long grey beard, and only one eye, and wore an iron helmet. He threw it on the ground, when two girls appeared, and the village child stayed with them till morning, when a young woman gave her a brooch which would enable her to return to the Misty Hill whenever she pleased. On reaching home, she found she had been absent seven years. On the first opportunity she returned to the hill by night, and her friend who had given her the brooch told her that the old man was the King of the Misty Hill, and the consort of the Meadow Queen, and she was their daughter. The girl continued her nightly visits to the Misty Hill; but after her mar-

riage, her husband discovered her disappearance, and taking her for a were-wolf, tried to burn her; but the King of the Misty Hill carried her away to his dwelling uninjured.

In the story of "The Orphan's Handmill" (Kreutzwald), a compassionate magician from Finland in the guise of a beggar enables an ill-used and overworked orphan girl to obtain a wonderful handmill in a chest, which he forbids her to open, but which grinds all the corn poured into it, without any labour on her part. Her mistress sends her to church, intending to discover the secret of the chest, and then to drive her away and keep the chest; but when she raises the lid, a bright flame bursts from the chest which burns her to ashes. Shortly afterwards, the girl's master marries the orphan, when the chest, having done its work, vanishes, leaving no trace, it having been carried away to the underground kingdom from which the girl had brought it in a vision, with the aid of the white horse (or mare), which always figures as an inhabitant of Põrgu.

THE ORPHAN BOY AND THE HELL-HOUNDS.[1]

(KREUTZWALD.)

ONCE upon a time there lived a poor labourer and his wife, who dragged on a wretched existence from day to day. They had three children, but only the youngest survived. He was a boy of nine years old when he buried first his father and then his mother, and he had no other resource than to beg his bread from door to door. A year afterwards he happened to come to the house of a rich farmer just when they wanted a herdboy. The farmer himself was not such a bad man to deal with, but his wife had control of everything, and she was a regular brute. It may easily be imagined how much the poor orphan boy suffered. The blows that he received daily were three times more than sufficient, but he never got enough bread to eat. But as the orphan had nothing

[1] The original title of this story is, "How an orphan made his fortune unexpectedly." Some commentators identify the keeper of the hounds with Othin. In the Scandinavian mythology the breaking loose of the monsters, the most terrible of whom is Garm, the watch-dog of Helheim, precedes the cataclysms of Ragnarök.

better to look forward to, he was forced to endure his misery.

One day the poor boy had the misfortune to lose a cow from the herd. He ran about the forest till sundown from one place to another, but could not find the lost cow; and although he well knew what awaited him when he reached home, he was at last obliged to gather the herd together without the missing cow. The sun had not set long when he already heard the voice of his mistress shouting, "You lazy dog, where are you dawdling with the herd?" He could not wait longer, but was forced to hurry home to the stick. It was already growing dusk when the herd arrived at the gate, but the sharp eyes of the mistress had already discovered that one cow was missing. Without saying a word, she snatched the first stake from the fence, and began to belabour the boy, as if she would beat him to a jelly. She was in such a rage that she would certainly have beaten him to death, or made him a cripple for life, if the farmer, hearing his cries and sobs, had not compassionately come to his aid. But as he knew the temper of the furious woman, he would not venture to interfere directly, but sought to

soften her, and said beseechingly, "Don't beat the boy quite to pieces, or he won't be able to look for the lost cow. We shall get more profit out of him if you don't quite kill him." "True enough," said the woman, "his carrion won't be worth as much as the good beef." Then she gave him a few more good whacks, and packed him off to look for the cow, saying, "If you come back without the cow, I'll beat you to death." The boy ran from the door sobbing and crying, and went back to the forest where he had been with the herd in the daytime, and searched all night, but could not find a trace of the cow anywhere. But when the sun rose next morning, he made up his mind what to do. "Whatever may happen to me," he said, "I won't go back again." Then he made a start, and ran straight forward at one stretch, till he had left the house far behind him. He himself could not tell how far he ran before his strength failed, and he sank down half dead when it was already almost noon. When at length he awoke from a long heavy sleep, he felt something cool in his mouth, and on opening his eyes, he saw a little old man with a long grey beard putting

the ladle back into a milk-can. "Please give me a little more to drink," said the boy. "You have had enough for to-day," answered the old man. "If I had not been passing this way by accident, you would have slept your last sleep, for you were already half dead when I found you." Then the old man asked the boy whence he came and whither he was going. The boy related everything that had happened to him, as far back as he could remember, down to last night's beating. The old man listened attentively to the story, but without interrupting, and after a while he remarked, "My dear child, you have fared neither better nor worse than many others whose dear friends and protectors lie beneath the sod. As you have run away, you must seek your fortune elsewhere in the world. But as I have neither house nor farm, nor wife nor child, I cannot do anything to help you but give you good advice gratis. Sleep here quietly through the night, and to-morrow morning note carefully the exact spot where the sun rises. You must proceed in that direction, so that the sun shines in your face every morning, and on your back every evening. Every day you will feel stronger, and after seven years you will see a

great mountain before you, so high that its summit reaches to the clouds. There you will find your future fortune. Take my wallet and my flask, and you will find as much food and drink in them as you require each day. But take care always to leave a crumb of bread and a drop of liquid untouched, or else your store of food will fail you.[1] You may give freely to a hungry bird or to a thirsty animal, for God is pleased when one of His creatures is kind to another. You will find a folded plantain-leaf at the bottom of the wallet, which you must take the greatest care of. When you come to a river or lake on your journey, spread the leaf on the water, and it will immediately change into a boat which will carry you over to the other side. Then fold the leaf together again, and put it into your wallet." After thus speaking, he gave the wallet and the flask to the boy, and said, "God bless

[1] This is the usual condition attached to such gifts, as in the Swiss story of a chamois-hunter who received an inexhaustible cheese from a mountain-spirit. But in the case of the magic saddlebags of the Moor in the story of Joodar (*Thousand and One Nights*), it was a condition that all the dishes should be put back empty. The Jews, too, were forbidden to leave anything over from the Passover Feast.

you!" The next moment he had vanished from the boy's eyes.

The boy would have supposed it to be all a dream, if he had not held the wallet and flask in his hand to convince him that it was a reality. He then looked into the wallet, where he found half a loaf, a small case of salt herrings, another of butter, and a nice piece of bacon. When the boy had eaten enough, he lay down to sleep, with the wallet and flask under his head, so that no thief should be able to take them from him. Next morning at sunrise he awoke, refreshed himself with food and drink, and then set out on his journey. It was strange that he felt no weariness, and only hunger made him aware that it was nearly noon. He ate the good fare with relish, took a nap, and travelled on. He found that he had taken the right course when the sun set behind his back. He travelled for many days in the same direction, when he arrived on the bank of a small lake. Now he had an opportunity of testing the properties of the leaf. All befell as the old man had foretold, for a small boat with oars lay before him on the water. He stepped in, and a few good strokes of the oars

landed him on the other side. Then the boat changed back into a leaf, and he put it into his wallet.

Thus the boy travelled for several years, without the provisions in his flask and wallet failing. Seven years may well have passed, for he had now become a strong youth, when one day he beheld afar off a lofty mountain which seemed to reach the clouds. But a whole week more passed before he could reach its foot. Then he sat down to rest, and to see whether the predictions of the old man would be accomplished. He had not sat there very long when a strange hissing fell upon his ear, and immediately afterwards an enormous serpent appeared, at least twelve fathoms long, which came quite close to the young man. Horror seized him, and he was unable to move, but the serpent passed by him in a moment. Then all was still awhile, but afterwards it seemed to him as if something heavy was moving along in sudden leaps. This proved to be a great toad,[1] as large as a foal of two years old. This ugly creature also passed by without taking any notice of the youth. Then he heard a rushing

[1] Or frog: the word is the same.

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noise above him, as if a great storm had arisen, and when he looked up, he saw a great eagle flying over his head in the direction which the serpent and the toad had taken. "These are queer things to bring me good fortune," thought the youth. Suddenly he beheld a man on a black horse riding towards him. The horse seemed to have wings to his feet, for he flew like the wind. When the man saw the youth sitting at the foot of the mountain, he reined in his horse and asked, "Who has passed by here?" The youth answered, "First of all a great serpent, perhaps twelve fathoms long, then a toad as large as a two-year-old foal, and lastly a great eagle high above my head. I could not guess at his size, but the sound of his wings was like that of a tempest." "You have seen well," answered the stranger. "These are my worst enemies, and I am now in pursuit of them. I might take you into my service, if you have nothing better in view. Climb over the mountain, and you will come straight to my house. I shall be there as soon as you, if not sooner." The young man promised to come, and the stranger rode away like the wind.

The youth did not find it easy to climb the mountain. It was three days before he could reach the summit, and three days more before he reached the foot of the mountain on the opposite side. His new acquaintance was standing in front of his house, and he informed him that he had succeeded in killing the serpent and the toad, but that he had not been able to reach the eagle. Then he asked the young man if he was willing to engage himself as his servant. "You can have as much good food as you want every day, and I will give you liberal wages too, if you will do your duty faithfully." The bargain was struck, and the master took his new servant into the house, and showed him what he had to do. A cellar was hewn in the rock, and closed with threefold doors of iron. "My savage dogs are chained in this cellar," said the master, "and you must take care that they do not dig their way out under the door with their paws. For know that if one of these savage dogs got loose, it would no longer be possible to restrain the others, for each would follow the other and destroy everything which lives upon the earth. If the last dog should break out, the end of the world would come, and the

sun would have shone for the last time." Then he led his servant to a hill which was not created by God, but heaped together by human hands from immense blocks of stone.

"These stones," said the master, "have been heaped together so that a fresh stone can always be rolled up as often as the dogs dig out a hole. I will show you the oxen which drag the stones, in the stall, and instruct you about everything else which you have to attend to."

In the stall were a hundred black oxen, each of which had seven horns, and they were fully as large as the largest oxen of the Ukraine.[1] "Six yoke of oxen harnessed before the waggon will drag a stone easily away. I will give you a crowbar, and when you touch the stone with it, it will roll into the waggon of itself. You see that your work is not very laborious, but your vigilance must be great in proportion. You must look to the door three times during the day, and once at night, lest any misfortune should happen, for the mischief might be much greater than you would be able to answer for to me."

[1] Either the extinct urus or the nearly extinct aurochs must be here intended.

Our friend soon comprehended his duties, and his new occupation was just to his taste. Each day he had the best of everything to eat and drink that a man could wish for. After two or three months the dogs had scratched a hole under the door large enough to put their tails out; but a stone was immediately rolled against the breach, and the dogs were forced to begin their work afresh.

Many years passed by, and the young man had accumulated a good store of money. Then the desire awoke in him to mingle with other men again, for it was so long since he had seen any human face except his master's. Although his master was kind, the young man found the time terribly long, especially when his master took the fancy to have a long sleep. At such times he slept for seven weeks at a stretch, without interruption, and without showing himself.

It chanced that the master had fallen into one of his deep slumbers, when one day a great eagle descended on the hill of stones and began to speak. "Are you not a great fool to sacrifice your pleasant life to good living? The money which you have saved is quite useless to you, for

there are no men here who require it. Take your master's swift horse from the stable, bind your bag of money to his neck, leap on his back, and ride away in the direction in which the sun sets, and after some weeks you will again find yourself among men. But you must bind the horse fast with an iron chain, so that he cannot run away, or he would return to his usual haunts, and your master would come to fight with you; but if he is without the horse, he cannot leave the place." "But who will watch the dogs here, if I go away while my master sleeps?" asked the young man. "A fool you are, and a fool you will remain," replied the eagle. "Are you not yet aware that God has created him for the express purpose of guarding the hell-hounds? It is from sheer laziness that he sleeps for seven weeks at a stretch. When he has no stranger as a servant, he will be obliged to rouse himself and do his own work himself."

This advice delighted the young man. He followed the counsel of the eagle, took the horse, bound the bag of gold on his neck, leaped on his back, and rode away. He had not ridden very far from the mountain when he heard his master

calling after him, "Stop, stop! Take your money and begone in God's name, but leave me my horse!" The youth paid no heed, but rode away, and after some weeks he found himself once more among mortal men. Then he built himself a nice house, married a young wife, and lived happily as a rich man. If he is not dead, he must be still living, but the wind-swift horse died long ago.

Of the next story we give only an abstract. It will be remembered that Linda was hatched from an egg, while the later adventures of the princess in the following tale resemble those of Cinderella.

THE EGG-BORN PRINCESS.

(KREUTZWALD.)

LIKE many others, this story begins with a childless queen whose husband is absent at the wars. She is visited by an old woman on crutches, who gives her a little box of birch-bark containing a bird's egg, and tells her to foster it in her bosom for three months, till a live doll like a human infant is hatched from it. This was to be kept in

a woollen basket till it had grown to the size of a new-born child. It would not require food or drink, but the basket must be kept in a warm place. Nine months after the doll's birth, the queen herself would give birth to a son, and the king was to proclaim that God had sent the royal parents a son and daughter. The queen was to suckle the prince herself, but to procure a nurse for the princess; and when the children were christened, the old woman wished to be their godmother, and gave the queen a bird's feather with which to summon her. The matter was to be kept secret. Then the old woman departed, but as she went, she grew suddenly young, and seemed to fly rather than to walk.

A fortnight afterwards the king returned victorious, and the queen was encouraged to hope for the best. In three months' time, a doll, half a finger long, was hatched from the egg, and all came to pass as the old woman had foretold. On the christening day, the queen opened one of the windows and cast out the feather.

When all the guests were assembled, a grand carriage drove up, drawn by six yolk-coloured horses, and a young lady stepped out in rose-

coloured gold-embroidered silken robes, which shone with sunlike radiance, though the face of the lady was concealed by a fine veil. She removed it on entering, when all agreed that she was the fairest maiden they had ever seen in their lives. She took the princess in her arms, and named her Rebuliina,[1] which puzzled everybody. A noble lord stood sponsor for the prince, who was named Villem. The godmother then gave the queen many instructions concerning the rearing of the children, and told her to keep the box with the egg-shells always beside them in the cradle, to ward off evil from them. Then she took her leave, and the queen gave out that she was a great princess from a foreign country.

The children throve, and the nurse observed that a strange lady sometimes came to gaze on the princess by night. Two years afterwards the queen fell sick, and gave over the princess to the charge of the nurse, directing her, under oath of secrecy, to fasten the talisman round the neck of the child when she was ten years old. She then sent for the king, and begged him to let the nurse

[1] Yolk-Carrie.

remain with the princess as long as the princess herself wished it, and after this she expired.

The king then brought home the inevitable cruel stepmother, who could not endure the sight of the children. When the princess was ten years old, her nurse put the talisman round her neck, but the thoughtless girl stowed it away with some other relics of her mother, and forgot it till a year or two afterwards, when the king was absent, and her stepmother cruelly beat her. She ran crying into the house, and looked in the box, but finding only a handful of wool and two empty eggshells in the box, threw them out of the window, along with a small feather which was under the wool. Immediately her godmother stood before her, and soothed and comforted her. She charged her to submit to her stepmother's tyranny, but always to carry the talisman in her bosom, for then no one could injure her, and when she was grown up, her stepmother would have no further power over her. The feather, too, would summon her godmother whenever she needed her. The lady then took the girl into the garden, pronounced a spell over the little box, and fetched out supper from it, teaching

the princess the spell by which she could obtain what she needed from it. But after this time her stepmother grew much more friendly to her.

The princess grew up a peerless maiden; but at length war broke out, and the royal city, and even the palace, were in such straits that Rebuliina summoned her godmother to her aid; but she told her that though she could rescue her, the rest must abide their fate. She then led her invisibly out of the city through the besieging army, and next day the city was taken. The prince escaped, but the king and his household were made prisoners, and the queen was slain by a hostile spear. The princess was changed by her godmother into a peasant maiden, and instructed to wait for better times, when she could resume her former appearance with the aid of the casket. After wandering alone for some days, the princess reached a district unravaged by war, and engaged herself as maid at a farm-house. She did her work admirably with the aid of the casket, and after a time attracted the notice of a noble lady who was passing through the village, who asked her to enter her service. Six months afterwards came news that the prince had driven out the enemy with the aid of an army from abroad,

and had been proclaimed king, the old king having died in prison in the meantime.

The prince was greatly grieved at his father's death, but after a year of mourning he resolved to take a bride, and all the maidens were bidden to a feast. The three daughters of Rebuliina's mistress were invited, and the godmother directed her in a dream to attire them first, and then to set out after them. She grew very restless, and when her mistress and the young ladies were gone, she sat down and wept bitter tears; but a voice told her to make use of the casket, and immediately magnificent gold-embroidered robes appeared on the bed; and as soon as she had washed her face, she resumed her former appearance, and was amazed at her own beauty when she looked in the glass. When she went down-stairs, she found a magnificent coach with four yolk-coloured horses at the door. Just as she reached the palace, she found to her horror that she had forgotten the casket, and was about to turn back, when a swallow brought it to her. Everything in the palace was joy and splendour; but as the princess entered, the other ladies paled like stars before the sun, and the king never left her side. At midnight the hall was suddenly

darkened, and then grew light again, when the godmother of the princess appeared, and presented her to the king as the adopted child of his father's first queen. Then there was a loud noise, and she disappeared. The king married the princess, and they lived happily together, but the casket was seen no more, and it was supposed that the god-mother had taken it with her.

THE ROYAL HERD-BOY.

(KREUTZWALD.)

ONCE upon a time there lived a king who was so mild and good to his subjects that there was no one who did not bless him, and pray to the Heavenly Father to grant him a long life.

The king had lived happily with his wife for many years, but as yet no child had blessed his marriage. Great was the rejoicing of the king and all his subjects when at length the queen brought a fair child into the world. But their happiness was short-lived, for three days after the birth of the prince, the mother closed her eyes for ever, leaving her child an orphan and

her husband a widower. The king mourned grievously for the loss of his dear consort, and his subjects mourned with him, and there was not a cheerful face to be seen anywhere. Three years afterwards the king married again, in deference to the wishes of his subjects, but he was unfortunate in his second choice. He had buried a dove and married a hawk in her place, and unfortunately it goes thus with many widowers. The new consort was a wicked, hard-hearted woman, who never showed any good-will towards the king and his subjects. She could not bear the sight of the former queen's son, as she feared that the succession would fall to him, for the people loved him greatly for his mother's sake. The crafty queen conceived the wicked design of sending the boy to some place where the king would be unable to discover him, for she had not courage to murder him. She paid a wicked old woman a large sum to help her to carry out her infamous design. The child was handed over to the old woman at night, and she carried it far away along unfrequented paths, and delivered it to some poor people to adopt as their child. On the way, the old woman stripped off the child's good

clothes, and wrapped it in rags, so that no one should discover the deceit. The queen had bound her by a solemn oath never to reveal to any one the place to which she had carried the prince. The child-stealer did not venture to travel by day, because she feared pursuit, so that it was a long time before she found a sufficiently retired spot. At last she reached a lonely house in a wood, where the feet of strangers rarely penetrated, and she thought this a suitable abode for the prince, and paid the peasant a hundred roubles for the expense of bringing up the child. It was lucky for the prince that he had fallen among good people, who cared for him as if he had been their own dear child. The lively boy often made them laugh, especially when he called himself a prince. They saw from the liberal payment that they had received that the boy could be from no common stock, and that he must be of noble birth on either the father's or the mother's side, but their ideas never soared high enough to fancy the boy's sallies to be actual truth.

It can easily be imagined how great was the consternation at the palace when it was discovered in the morning that the prince had been stolen during

the night, and in so strange a manner that no one had heard anything, and that not the slightest trace of the thief was left behind. The king wept bitterly for days for his son, whom he loved so tenderly in remembrance of his mother, and all the more because he was so unhappy with his new consort. Every place was searched thoroughly for a long time for some trace of the vanished child, and a great reward was offered to any one who could give any information; but every effort was vain, and it seemed as if the boy had been blown away. None of the searchers found his way to the lonely cottage in the wood where the prince lived, and no one brought the news to the inhabitants. No one could discover the secret, and many people thought that the prince had been carried away by an evil spirit or by witchcraft. But while the prince was wept for at home as if he was dead, he grew up in the lonely forest, and prospered wonderfully, till he grew to such an age that he was fit for work. Meantime he developed such wonderful intelligence, that his foster-parents were often obliged to admit that the egg was much cleverer than the hen.

The prince had lived thus for more than ten years, when he became anxious to associate with

other people. He begged his foster-parents to allow him to earn his bread with his own hands, and said, "I have strength and understanding enough to keep myself without your help. I find the time very long during this lonely life here." His foster-parents opposed the plan at first, but were at length obliged to consent and to gratify the young fellow's wish. The peasant himself accompanied him in search of suitable employment. He found a rich farmer in a village who wanted a herd-boy, and as his foster-son wanted just such a post, they soon came to an agreement. The arrangement was made for a year, but it was settled that the boy might leave his employment at any time and return to his foster-parents. It was also settled that if the farmer was dissatisfied with the boy, he might send him away during the course of the year, but not without informing his foster-parents.

The village where the prince had thus taken service was not far from a great highway, along which many people passed daily, both high and low. The royal herd-boy often sat close to the road, and talked to the passers-by, from whom he learned many things which would otherwise

have remained unknown to him. So it happened one day that an old man with grey hair and a long white beard passed that way when the prince was sitting on a stone and playing the flute while the animals were grazing, and if one of them strayed too far from the others, the boy's dog drove it back. The old man gazed awhile at the boy and his flock, and then he went a few paces nearer and said, "You don't seem to have been born a herd-boy." The boy answered, "It may be so; I only know that I was born to be a ruler, and first learned the business of a ruler. If it goes well with the quadrupeds, I will perhaps try my fortune later on with the bipeds." The old man shook his head in wonder and went his way. Another time a handsome coach passed by, in which sat a lady and two children. There was a coachman on the box and a footman behind. The prince happened to have a basket of freshly-plucked strawberries in his hand, which attracted the notice of the proud Saxon lady.[1] She ordered the coachman to stop, and called out from the coach-window, "Come here, you lout, and bring me the strawberries. I will give you a few copecks for

[1] Compare pages 246 and 248.

them, to buy wheaten bread." The royal herd-boy did as if he had heard nothing, and did not imagine that the order was addressed to him, while the lady called out a second and a third time; but it was as if she had spoken to the wind. Then she called to the footman behind, "Go and give that vagabond a box on the ear, to teach him to listen." The footman jumped down to execute the order. But before he reached him, the herd-boy jumped up, seized a thick stick, and called out to the footman, "If you don't want a broken head, don't come a step nearer, or I'll smash your face." The footman went back and reported the occurrence. Then the lady cried out angrily, "What, you rascal, are you afraid of this lout of a boy? Go and take away his basket by force. I'll show him who I am, and I'll punish his parents too, for not bringing him up better."

"Oho!" cried the herd-boy, who heard the order. "As long as there is any life in my limbs, nobody shall deprive me of my rightful property by force. I'll stamp anybody to broth who tries to rob me of my strawberries." As he spoke, he spat on his hands, and whirled his cudgel round his head till it whistled. When the footman

saw it, he had not the least desire to attempt it, but the lady drove away with violent threats, declaring that she would not permit this insult to remain unpunished. Other herd-boys who had seen and heard the affair from a distance related it to their companions in the evening. The people were all frightened, for they thought it would fare ill with them also if the great lady complained to the authorities about the boy's stupid obstinacy and an inquiry was ordered. The prince's master scolded him, and said, "I can't say anything in your favour, and what you've cooked you must eat yourself." The boy replied, "I shall come off scatheless; that's my affair. God has put a mouth in my head and a tongue in my mouth, and I can speak for myself if necessary, and I won't ask you to be my advocate. If the lady had asked for the strawberries in a proper way, I would have given them to her; but how dared she call me a lout? My nose[1] is just as clean as hers."

Meantime the lady drove to the royal city, where she had nothing more pressing to do than to complain to the authorities of the insolent behaviour

[1] The word translated "lout" means literally "filthy-nose."

of the herd-boy. An investigation was ordered at once, and the youth and his master were ordered to appear before the authorities. When the messenger entered the village to enforce the order, the prince said, "My master has nothing to do with this affair, and I myself must answer for what I did yesterday." They wanted to bind his hands behind his back, and to lead him before the court as a prisoner, but he drew a sharp knife from his pocket, stepped some paces back, turned the point against his breast, and cried out, "No one shall bind me while I live! Rather than let you bind me, I will thrust the knife into my heart. You may then bind my corpse, or do whatever you please with it, but no man shall lay a cord or fetter on me while I live. I am quite ready to appear before the court and give evidence, but I will never go there as a prisoner." His boldness frightened the messengers, and they were afraid to approach him, for they feared that the blame would fall on them if the boy carried out his threat; and as he was ready to go with them of his own accord, they were obliged to be content. On the way, the messengers wondered more and more at the understanding and

cleverness of their prisoner, for he knew everything better than they did themselves. But much greater was the astonishment of the judges when they heard the account of the affair from the boy's own mouth. He spoke so clearly and reasonably that they gave judgment in his favour, and acquitted him of all blame. The great lady then applied to the king, who promised to investigate the whole affair himself; but he also was forced to agree with the judges and to pronounce the youth innocent. The lady was now ready to burst with rage at the thought that a peasant boy should have gained a verdict in her despite. She complained to the queen, knowing that she was very much harsher than the king. "My consort," said the queen, "is an old idiot, and his judges are all fools. It is a pity that you brought the matter before the court, instead of coming to me, for I would have managed the affair differently, and would have done you justice. Now that the matter has passed through the court, and the judgment is confirmed by the king, I am no longer in a position to put a better face on it openly, but we must see how we can arrange to punish the youth without attracting attention." It occurred

to the lady that there lived a very ill-tempered peasant woman on her estate, with whom no servant would stay, while her husband said that his life with her was more uncomfortable than if he was in hell. If the impudent boy could be induced to go to her as herd-boy, she thought the woman would give him a severer punishment than any judge could inflict upon him. "I'll arrange the matter just as you wish," said the queen. So she summoned a trustworthy messenger, and instructed him what to do. If she had had the least idea that the herd-boy was the exiled prince, she would have had him put to death at once, without troubling herself about the king or the judges' decision.

As soon as the prince's master heard the queen's desire, he at once released the herd-boy from his service. He thanked his stars that he had got out of the scrape so easily. The queen's messenger now took the lad to the farm to which she had consigned him without his consent. The wicked old woman shouted for joy when she heard that the queen had found her a herd-boy, and sent word that she might treat him as she pleased, because the youth was very perverse, and nothing good was to

be got out of him. She did not know how hard the new millstone was, and hoped to treat him in her usual fashion; but she was soon to discover that this fence was too high to jump over, and that the youth would not sacrifice a hair's-breadth of his rights. If she gave him a single bad word without cause, he gave her a dozen back; and if she lifted her hand against him, he caught up a stone or a log of wood, or anything else which happened to come to hand, and cried out, "Don't dare to come a step nearer, or I'll split your skull and mash you to soup." The woman had never heard such language from anybody, least of all from her servants; but her husband rejoiced in secret when he heard her quarrelling, and he did not stand by his wife, for the boy did not neglect his duty. The woman tried to break the boy's spirit with hunger, and refused him food, but the boy helped himself by force to whatever he could find, and helped himself to milk from the cow besides, so that he was never hungry. The more difficult she found it to manage the boy, the more she vented her rage on her husband and others about her. When the prince had led this vexatious life for some weeks, and found that each day was like the other, he determined to pay the

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old woman out for her wickedness in such a fashion that the world should be quite rid of such a monster, In order to carry out his design, he caught a dozen wolves and shut them up in a cave, and he threw them a beast from his flock every day, so that they should not starve. Who can describe the woman's rage when she saw her property gradually dwindling, for every day the boy brought home an animal less than he had taken to pasture in the morning, and his only answer when questioned was, "The wolves have devoured it." She screamed like a maniac, and threatened to throw the boy to the wild beasts to devour, but he answered, laughing, "Wouldn't your own savage meat be better for them?" Then he left the wolves for three days without food in the cave, and at night, when every one was asleep, he drove the herd from their stall, and put the twelve wolves in instead, fastening the door securely, so that the wild beasts should not escape. When he had thus arranged everything, he turned his back on the farm, for he had long been tired of playing herd-boy, and now felt strong enough for greater undertakings.[1]

[1] In the *Kalevala*, Runo 33, Kullervo revenges himself in the same manner upon the wife of Ilmarinen, whom he has been

But what horrors happened next morning, when the woman went into the stall to let out the animals and to milk the cows! The wolves, maddened with hunger, rushed upon her, pulled her down, and devoured the whole of her, clothes and skin, and hair and all, so that nothing remained but her tongue and heart, which were too poisonous for even the wild beasts to touch. Neither her husband nor her servants lamented the misfortune, for every one was delighted to be rid of such an infernal woman.

The prince wandered about the world for some years, trying his hand first at one trade and then at another, but he never stayed long in one place, for the recollections of his childhood, which hovered about him like vivid dreams, always warned him that he was born to a higher condition. From time to time he encountered the old man again, who had read this in his eyes while he was still a herd-boy. When the prince was eighteen years old, he engaged himself to a gardener to learn gardening. Just at this time an event happened which changed the course of his life. The wicked old woman who had

serving as herd-boy, and who has treated him with great cruelty and harshness.

taken him away by the queen's orders, and had given him into the charge of the people at the forest-farm, confessed her crime to the priest on her death-bed, for her soul was burdened with the weight of her sins, and could not find rest till she had revealed it. She indicated the farmhouse to which she had brought the child, but could not tell whether the prince was now living or dead. The priest hastened to the king with the joyful tidings that a trace of his lost son was found at last. The king informed no one of what he had heard, but immediately ordered his horse to be saddled, and set out on his way with three faithful attendants. In a few days they reached the farm in the wood. Both the farmer and his wife confirmed the fact that at such and such a time a male child had been given into their charge to rear, and that they had received one hundred roubles at the same time for their expenses. They had concluded from this circumstance that the child was probably of high birth, but they had never supposed that he was of royal descent, and had thought that the boy was only jesting when he had called himself a prince. Then the farmer himself attended the king to the village where he had taken the youth as herd-boy, not, indeed, by his own wish, but at the request

of the boy, who could not live longer in that lonely place. But how shocked was the farmer, and still more the king, when they did not find the boy, who must now be grown to a young man, in the village, and could learn no further tidings of him! All that the people could tell them was that the boy was summoned before the court at the suit of a noble lady, and that he had been acquitted and set at liberty; but after this one of the queen's servants had taken the boy away and put him to service at another farm. The king hastened thither, and found that his son had indeed been there for a few weeks, but he had fled, and nothing more had been heard of him. Where should they now seek for advice, and who was able to direct their search aright?

While the king was thus greatly troubled at losing all traces of his son, the old man who had several times encountered the prince presented himself and said that he knew such a young man as they sought for, who had first served as a herdsman and had afterwards worked at several other occupations, and that he hoped to be able to discover him. The king promised the old man a rich reward if he could help him to find his son, and he ordered one of his attendants to dismount from his

horse, and pressed the old man to mount, so that they could travel quicker; but he said, smiling, "No matter how fast a horse can run, my legs can run as fast, for they have traversed larger districts of the world than any horse." In fact, in a week's time they came upon the traces of the prince, and found him in the grounds of a magnificent mansion, where he was engaged as gardener. The king's joy was unbounded when he recovered his son, whom he had mourned for so many years as dead. Tears of joy streamed down his cheeks as he strained his son to his breast and kissed him. But he heard tidings from his son's mouth which damped the joy of their meeting, and caused him fresh trouble. The gardener had a young and beautiful daughter, fairer than all the flowers in this splendid garden, and as pure and good as an angel. The prince had lost his heart to this maiden, and he told his father plainly that he would never marry a lady of higher rank, but would take the gardener's daughter as his consort, even if he should be forced to abandon his kingdom for her. "Come home first," said the king, "and afterwards we will talk the matter over." Then the prince asked his father for a costly gold ring, and

put it on the maiden's finger before the eyes of all, saying, "With this ring I betroth thee, and I will return, whether the time be long or short, to claim thee as my bride." But the king answered, "No, not so; the affair shall be arranged otherwise." He took the ring from the maiden's finger and clove it in twain with his sword. One half he gave to his son, and the other to the gardener's daughter, and said, "If God has created you for one another, the two halves of the ring will grow together of themselves at the proper time, so that the point at which the ring was divided cannot be detected. Let each keep their half till the time shall be fulfilled."

The queen was ready to burst with rage when she saw her stepson, whom she thought had disappeared for ever, suddenly return as the undisputed heir to the throne, for the king had only two daughters by his second marriage. A few years afterwards the king closed his eyes in death, and his son became king. Notwithstanding the great wrongs which he had received from his stepmother, he would not return evil for evil, but left her to the justice of God. Although she no longer hoped to set one of her daughters on the throne in his place,

she hoped at least to wed him to a noble lady of her own family; but he answered, "I will not consent, for I have chosen my bride long since." When the queen-dowager learned that the young king was resolved to marry a maiden of low birth, she incited the highest councillors of the kingdom to attempt unanimously to prevent it. But the king remained firm, and would not yield. After the matter had been discussed for a long time, the king announced his final decision. "We will give a great feast, and invite all the princesses and all the other unmarried ladies of high birth; and if I find one among them who surpasses my chosen bride in grace and beauty, I will marry her. But if this is not the case, my betrothed shall become my consort."

Thereupon a magnificent feast was prepared in the royal palace, which was to last a fortnight, that the king might have full opportunity of considering whether any of the ladies surpassed the gardener's daughter. All the great ladies in the neighbourhood were invited to bring their daughters to the feast, and as the object of the gathering was generally known, every maiden hoped that the great prize would fall to her. The feast drew to a close, and yet the king had not met with one who pleased his

fancy. On the last day of the feast the highest councillors of the kingdom again presented themselves before the king, and said, as the queen had instructed them, that if the king did not make his choice before evening, an insurrection might break out, for all his subjects wished the king to marry. The king replied, "I will accede to the wish of my subjects, and will announce my choice this evening." Then, unknown to the others, he sent a trustworthy messenger to bring the gardener's daughter away secretly, and to keep her in concealment till evening. In the evening the royal palace was ablaze with light, and all the great ladies were robed in their most elegant attire, expecting the moment which should bring them good fortune or the reverse. But the king advanced to a young lady in the hall who was so muffled up that you could hardly see the tip of her nose. All were struck with the simple dress of the stranger. She was clothed in fine white linen, and wore neither silk, satin, nor gold, while all the other ladies were robed from head to foot in silks and satins. Some curled their lips, and others turned up their noses, but the king took no notice, but loosed the maiden's head-gear, and led her to the

queen-dowager, saying, "Here is my chosen bride, whom I will take as my consort, and I invite all who are here assembled to my wedding." The queen-dowager cried out angrily, "What better could be expected of a man who was reared as a herd-boy? If you want to go back to your business, take the maid with you, who may perhaps understand tending swine, but is quite unfit for a king's consort. Such a peasant girl can only disgrace the throne of a king." These words moved the king to anger, and he answered sternly, "I am king, and can do what I will, but woe to you who have brought my former condition to my remembrance; and you have also reminded me who reduced me to this. However, as no sensible man buys a cat in a sack, I will show you all before we separate that I could nowhere have found a more suitable bride than this very maiden, who is as pure and good as an angel from heaven." As he spoke, he left the room, but soon returned with the old man whom he had known ever since he was a herd-boy, and who had afterwards put the king on the track of his son. The old man was a famous sorcerer from Finland, who knew many secret arts. The king said, "Mighty sorcerer, show us by your

art the inmost character of the maidens here present, that we may know which of them is most worthy to become my bride." The sorcerer took a bottle filled with a liquid that looked like wine, muttered a spell over it, and directed the maidens to gather in the midst of the hall. He then sprinkled a few drops on the head of each, and they all fell asleep as they stood. But what a wonderful thing now happened! In a short time they were all so transformed that none retained her human shape, but some were changed into snakes, wolves, bears, toads, swine, or cats, and others became hawks or other birds of prey. But among all these bestial forms was a beautiful rose-bush, covered with flowers, and with two doves nestling on its branches. And this was the gardener's daughter whom the king had chosen as his consort. Then said the king, "We have now seen the inmost kernel of each, and I am not going to let myself be dazzled by the outer shell." The queen-dowager could not contain herself for rage, but the matter was so clear that she was unable to help herself. Then the sorcerer fumigated all the maidens with magic herbs, which roused them from their sleep and restored them to their human shapes. The

king received his beloved from the rose-bush, and asked for her half-ring, and when the maiden drew it from her bosom, he took his own half-ring, and laid them together on the palm of his hand, when the two halves immediately united, and no eye could perceive a crack or any indication of the spot where the sword-stroke had cleft the ring. "Now my honoured father's wish has come to pass," said the young king, and celebrated his union with the gardener's daughter on the same evening. He invited all those present to a wedding-feast, but the noble ladies had learned what wonders had taken place during their sleep, and they returned home full of shame. But so much the greater was the joy of the king's subjects that their queen was a perfect woman both in form and character.

When the wedding festivities were ended, the king assembled all the leading judges of the kingdom and asked them what punishment was fitting for a criminal who had secretly stolen away the king's son, and had him brought up in a peasant's cot as a herd-boy, and had afterwards treated the youth with insolent contempt after he had recovered his former position. All the judges answered with one accord, "Such a criminal is worthy to die on the

gallows." Then said the king, "Good! let the queen-dowager be brought to trial." The queen-dowager was summoned, and the sentence was announced to her. When she heard it, she turned as white as the wall, and fell on her knees before the young king pleading for mercy. The king said, "I give you your life, and I should never have brought you before the court if it had not happened that you lately insulted me respecting the misfortunes which I endured through your crime; but you cannot remain in my kingdom any longer. You must pack up your goods this very day, and quit my city before sundown. An escort will accompany you to the frontier. But beware lest you ever set foot again in my territories, for any man, even the meanest, has leave to kill you like a mad dog. Your daughters, who are also the daughters of my honoured father, may remain here, for they are innocent of the crimes which rest upon your soul."

Now that the queen-dowager was banished, the young king built two pretty houses near his city, one of which he assigned to the parents of his bride, and the other to his own foster-father, who had so carefully brought up the helpless prince.

The prince who had grown up as a herd-boy and his low-born bride lived happily to the end, and ruled their subjects with as much affection as parents their children.

The story of Tiidu[1] the Flute-player introduces us to a mysterious old man, and is therefore given a place after the narrative of the stolen prince. It contains many points of interest, including the cosmopolitan incident of the Nose-tree (which, however, some critics suggest is probably a recent addition); but it is long and tedious in the original, and therefore only an abstract is given here.

TIIDU THE FLUTE-PLAYER.

A POOR man with a large family had among them a lazy useless son who would do nothing but play tunes on a willow-pipe. One day a strange old man passed by, and asked what trade he would prefer. He replied that he would like to be rich and independent. The old man advised him to make use of the gift he had, and to earn money

[1] Titus.

enough by playing on his willow-flute to buy a flute.[1] So Tiidu left his home without telling his parents of his intention, but they were glad enough to be rid of him. He wandered from village to village till he had earned enough money to buy a good flute, and in a few years he became a famous and prosperous flute-player. But his avarice left him no peace, and he heard so much of the wealth of the land of Kungla, that he longed to go there to make his fortune.

One day he arrived at the town of Narva, where he found a ship just sailing for Kungla; but as he could not afford to pay his passage, he contrived to smuggle himself on board with the aid of one of the sailors. On the following night, Tiidu's friend threw him into the sea with a rope round his body, when Tiidu began to cry for help, and his friend roused the other sailors. The captain crossed himself thrice, and on being assured by the sailors that it was not a spirit but a mortal man, ordered a rope to be thrown to the aid of the swimmer. As soon as

[1] Here, as well as in the stories relative to the Thunder-God's musical instrument, Löwe calls it a bagpipe; but I do not find this meaning for the word in the dictionaries. Still, in the present story, it appears to have been a rather expensive instrument.

Tiidu seized the rope, he cut away that which was fastened round him, and on being hauled on board, pretended to have swum from the shore. On this the captain offered him a free passage, and he amused the crew with his flute during the voyage.

When Tiidu reached Kungla, he set out for the capital, which he found to be a city of great wealth and splendour. He was afraid to try his luck with his flute, and after many days he succeeded in obtaining a post as kitchen-boy. All the utensils were of gold and silver, the food was cooked in silver pots, the cakes were baked in silver pans, and dinner was served up in golden cups and dishes, and even the pigs fed from silver pails. Tiidu's month's wages were larger than he would have earned in a year at home, but still he was very discontented.

One day Tiidu's master gave a christening, and distributed fine clothes to his servants; and next Sunday Tiidu put them on and went to a pleasure-garden, where he met his old friend who had advised him to play the flute, and who now reproached him for having neglected to use it in Kungla. He made him fetch it and begin to play, when a crowd gathered round, who made a good collection for

Tiidu. The old man gave Tiidu full instructions how to follow the vocation of a flute-player profitably, and Tiidu followed his advice and grew very rich.

At last he decided to return home, and chartered a ship to convey himself and his treasures to his native land; but a great storm arose, the ship was wrecked, and only Tiidu contrived to struggle ashore. He lay dazed for a time, and dreamed that the old man visited him, and gave him a pull from his flask. Next morning, much refreshed, he wandered into the country, which he found to be an uninhabited island. He now repented of his undutiful conduct in leaving his parents, and felt his sad plight to be a fitting punishment for his fault.

All at once he saw a tree with beautiful red apples, feasted on them, lay down to sleep for the night, breakfasted on the apples, and walked on; but on stooping down to drink at a spring, he saw to his horror that his nose hung down to his middle, and looked like the wattles of an enraged turkey-cock; and the more he lamented his misfortune, the bigger and bluer became his nose. At last he discovered a nut-tree, and found that eating a few nuts restored his nose to its natural state. So he laid in a stock

of nuts, wove himself a basket, which he filled with apples, and then slept under the tree, when the old man appeared to him in a dream, advised him to return to the shore, and gave him a new flute.

When he reached the shore, he was picked up by a passing vessel, and returned to Kungla, where he disguised himself, sold the apples at the palace, and next day presented himself in another guise as a learned foreign physician to cure the king and the royal family of the turkey-disease. In return, Tiidu asked only as much reward as would enable him to purchase an estate on which he could live comfortably for the rest of his life, but the king cheerfully gave him three times as much as he asked, and Tiidu then went to the harbour and sailed home. First, however, he paid his passage-money to the captain who had rescued him from the desert island.

On reaching home, Tiidu found his father and several brothers and sisters still living, but his mother and some of his brothers were dead. He bought an estate, invited the whole family to a great feast, and revealed himself to them, and he insisted that they should all settle on his estate,

and that his father should stay with him in his own house as long as he lived.

A little later he married a good and pretty but dowerless girl, and on entering the bridal chamber they found that it contained all the treasures which Tiidu had lost at sea, with a paper attached: "Even the depths of the sea restore the treasures which they have stolen to a good son who cares for parents and relatives." But Tiidu never discovered anything about the aged enchanter who had been his friend and protector.

THE LUCKY EGG.

(KREUTZWALD.)

ONCE upon a time a poor man lived in a great forest with his wife. God had given them eight children, and the elder ones were already earning their living with strangers. So the parents were not much rejoiced when a ninth little son was born to them in their old age. But as God had given it to them, they were obliged to accept it, and to have it christened according to Christian usage. But they could find no one willing to stand sponsor for

the child, for everybody thought that if the parents died, the child would be left a burden on their hands. Then said the father, "I will take the child and carry it to church next Sunday, and say that although I can find no sponsors for the child, the parson may please himself. Then, whether he christens the child or not, no sin can rest on my soul."

When he set out on Sunday, he found a beggar sitting by the wayside near his house, who asked for alms. The father said, "I have nothing to give you, dear brother, for I must pay out the few copecks which I have in my pocket for the christening. But if you will do me a kindness, come and stand godfather to my child, and afterwards go home with me, and share the christening feast which my good wife has prepared." The beggar, who had never before been invited to stand godfather to anybody's child, joyfully accepted the man's proposal, and went with him to the church. Just as they arrived, a magnificent carriage and four drove up, and a young Saxon lady alighted from it. The poor man thought, "Now I'll try my luck for the last time." He bowed respectfully to the unknown lady, and said, "Noble lady, whoever

you may be! will you not have the kindness to stand godmother to my child?" The lady consented.

When the child was brought up to be baptized after the sermon, the parson and the congregation were much surprised to see a poor beggar-man and a proud handsome lady standing together as sponsors for the child. The child was baptized by the name of Pärtel.[1] The rich lady paid the christening fees, and also made a christening present of three roubles, which much rejoiced the child's father. The beggar went home to the christening feast. Before leaving in the evening, he took from his pocket a small box wrapped in a piece of rag, and gave it to the child's mother, saying, "My christening gift is poor enough, but do not despise it, for it may possibly bring your son good fortune some day. I had a very clever aunt, who understood all sorts of magic arts, and before she died she gave me the bird's egg in this little box, saying, 'When something quite unexpected happens to you, which you could never have imagined, then part with this egg. If it comes into the possession of him for whom it is destined, it may bring him great good

[1] Bartholomew.

fortune. But guard the egg like the apple of your eye, that it does not break, for the shell of fortune is tender.' But although I am nearly sixty years old, nothing unexpected has happened to me till to-day, when I was invited to stand as godfather, and my first thought was, You must give the egg to the child as a christening gift."

The little Pärtel grew and prospered, and became the delight of his parents, and at the age of ten he was sent to another village to become herd-boy to a rich farmer. All the people of the household were well satisfied with the herd-boy, as he was a good quiet fellow, who never gave any annoyance to his companions. When he left home, his mother put his christening gift in his pocket, and charged him to keep it as safe as the apple of his eye, and Pärtel did so. There was an old lime-tree in the pasturage, and a large granite rock lay under it. The boy was very fond of this place, and every day in summer he used to go and sit on the stone under the lime-tree. Here he used to eat the lunch which was given him every morning, and he quenched his thirst at a little brook hard by. Pärtel had no friendship with the other herd-boys, who were up to all sorts of pranks. It was remarkable that there was no such fine grass

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anywhere as between the stone and the spring, and although the flocks grazed here every day, next morning the grass looked more like that of an enclosed meadow than of a pasturage.

When Pärtel slept a little while on the stone on a hot day, he had wonderfully pleasant dreams, and when he awoke, the sounds of music and song were still in his ears, so that he dreamed on after his eyes were open. The stone was like a dear friend to him, and he parted from it every day with a heavy heart, and returned to it next day full of longing. Thus Pärtel lived till he was fifteen years old, and was no longer to be herd-boy. His master now employed him as a farm-labourer, but did not give him any heavier work than he was able to accomplish. On Sundays and summer evenings, the other young men used to go to visit their sweethearts, but Pärtel did not join their company. He stole away, in deep meditation, to his favourite lime-tree in the pasturage, and often sat under it for half the night. One Sunday evening he was sitting on the stone playing the flute, when a milk-white snake crept out from under the stone. It raised its head as if to listen, and looked at Pärtel with its bright eyes, which shone like fire. This

happened often, and whenever Pärtel had any time to spare, he used to hasten to the stone to see the beautiful white snake, which at last became so familiar with him that it often coiled round his leg.

Pärtel was now growing up to be a young man; his father and mother were dead, and his brothers and sisters lived widely scattered, and seldom heard any tidings of each other, and still more rarely met. But the white snake had grown dearer to him than his brothers and sisters, and his thoughts were with her by day, and he dreamed of her almost every night. This made the winter-time seem very long to him, when the earth was frozen and the snow lay deep on the ground. When the sun-rays melted the snow in spring and the ground was thawed, Pärtel's first walk was to the stone under the lime-trees, though there was not a leaf to be seen upon the tree as yet. O what joy! As soon as he breathed forth his longing in the notes of the flute, the white snake crept out from under the stone, and played about his feet. But it seemed to Pärtel to-day that the snake shed tears, and this made his heart sad. He now let no evening pass without visiting the stone, and the snake grew continually tamer, and she would let

him stroke her; but if he tried to hold her fast, she slipped through his fingers, and crept back under the stone.

On Midsummer Eve all the villagers, old and young, went together to St. John's fire. Pärtel was not allowed to stay behind, though his heart drew him in another direction. But in the midst of the fun, when all the others were singing, dancing, and amusing themselves, he slippped away to the lime-tree, the only place where his heart was at ease. When he drew near, he saw a clear bright fire shining from the stone, which surprised him very much, for, as far as he knew, nobody but himself ever visited the spot. But when he reached the stone, the fire had disappeared, without leaving either ashes or sparks behind it. He sat down on the stone, and began to play on his flute as usual. All at once the fire blazed up again, and it was nothing else than the sparkling eyes of the white snake. She played about his feet again, allowed him to stroke her, and gazed at him as wistfully as if she was going to speak. It must have been almost midnight when the snake crept back to her nest under the stone, and did not re-appear while Pärtel was playing. As he took the

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instrument from his mouth and put it in his pocket and prepared to go home, the leaves of the lime-tree rustled in the breeze so strangely that it sounded like a human voice, and he thought he heard the following words repeated several times:

> "Thin-shelled is the egg of Fortune,
> And the heart is full of sorrow;
> Venture not to spoil your fortune."

Thereupon he experienced such a painful longing that his heart was like to break, and yet he did not know himself what he pined for. He began to weep bitterly, and lamented, "What does the lucky egg avail me, when no happiness is permitted me in this world? I have felt from childhood that I was unfit to mix with men, for they do not understand me, and I do not understand them. What causes pleasure to them is painful to me, while I myself know not what could make me happy, and how then should others know it? Riches and poverty stood together as my sponsors, and therefore nothing will go right with me."

Suddenly it became as bright around him as if the mid-day sun was shining on the lime-tree and the rock, and he could not open his eyes for a time,

until he had got used to the light. Then he beheld a lovely female figure sitting beside him on the stone, clad in snow-white raiment, as if an angel had flown down from heaven. The maiden's voice sounded sweeter to him than the song of the nightingale as she addressed him. "Dear youth, fear nothing, but give heed to the prayer of an unhappy girl. I am imprisoned in a miserable dungeon, and if you do not pity me, I can never hope to escape. O dear youth, take pity on me, and do not cast me off! I am the daughter of a king of the East, possessed of fabulous riches in gold and silver, but all this avails me nothing, for an enchanter has compelled me to live under this stone in the form of a white snake. I have lived thus for many centuries, without ever growing older. Although I never injured any human being, all fled before my shape, as soon as they beheld me. You are the only living being who did not fly at my approach; you have even allowed me to play about your feet, and have often kindly stroked me with your hand. Your kindness has led me to hope that you might be able to effect my deliverance. Your heart is as pure as that of a child, as yet ignorant of falsehood and deception. You have

all the signs which point to my rescue; a noble lady and a beggar stood together as your sponsors, and your christening gift was the egg of Good Fortune. I am only permitted to resume my human form once in twenty-five years on Midsummer Eve, and to wander about the earth for an hour, and if I should meet with a youth pure in heart, and with your peculiarities, who would listen to my request, I might be released from my long imprisonment. Save me, O save me from this endless imprisonment! I beseech you in the name of all the angels."

Having thus spoken, she fell at Pärtel's feet, embraced his knees, and wept bitterly.

Pärtel's heart was melted by her tears and supplications, and he begged the maiden to stand up, and to tell him what he could do to rescue her. "If it was possible for me to save you," said he, "I would go through fire and water. I am filled with an unknown longing which allows me no peace; but what I long for, I cannot tell."

The maiden answered, "Come here again tomorrow evening about sunset, and if I meet you in my snake-form, and wind myself round your body like a girdle, and kiss you three times, do not start or shrink back, or I shall again be overwhelmed by

the waters of enchantment, and who knows for how many centuries?"

As she spoke, the maiden vanished from the youth's sight, and he again heard the sighing in the leaves of the lime-tree:

"Thin-shelled is the egg of Fortune,
And the heart is full of sorrow;
Venture not to spoil your fortune."

Pärtel went home and lay down to sleep before dawn, but his rest was disturbed by wonderfully varied dreams, some beautiful, some hideous. He sprang up with a shriek, for a dream showed him the white snake coiling round his breast and suffocating him. But he thought no more of this horrible picture, and firmly resolved to release the princess from the bonds of enchantment, even if he himself should perish. Nevertheless his heart failed him more and more as the sun sank nearer the horizon. At the appointed time he stood by the stone under the lime-tree, and gazed, sighing, towards heaven, praying for strength and courage, that he might not tremble with weakness when the snake should coil round his body and kiss him. Suddenly he remembered the lucky egg: he took the little box from his pocket, opened it, and took

the little egg, which was not larger than that of a sparrow, between his fingers.

At this moment the snow-white snake glided from under the stone, wound round his body, and had just raised her head to kiss him, when—he himself knew not how it happened—he pushed the lucky egg into her mouth. His heart froze within him, but he stood firm, without shrinking, till the snake had kissed him three times. A tremendous flash and crash followed, as if the stone had been struck by lightning, and amid the loud pealing of the thunder, Pärtel fell on the ground like one dead, and knew nothing more of what happened to him.

But at this terrible moment the bondage of the enchantment was loosened, and the royal maiden was released from her long captivity. When Pärtel awakened from his heavy swoon, he found himself lying on cushions of white silk in a magnificent glass room of a sky-blue colour. The fair maiden knelt by his bedside, patted his cheek, and cried out, when he opened his eyes, "Thanks to the Heavenly Father who has heard my prayer, and a thousand thousand thanks to you, dear youth, who released me from my long enchantment! Take my kingdom as your reward, along with this beautiful palace, and

all my treasures, and if you will, accept me also as your bride into the bargain! You shall always live here in happiness, as befits the lord of the lucky egg. Hitherto your lot has been as that of your godfather, but now you succeed to a better lot, such as fell to your godmother."

No one could now come between Pärtel and his happiness and good fortune, and all the unknown longings of his heart, which constantly drew him back under the lime-tree, were finally laid to rest. He lived apart from the world with his dear bride in the enjoyment of the greatest happiness until his death.

But great sorrow was caused by his disappearance, both in the village, and in the farm-house where he had worked, and where he was much loved for his steady quiet ways. All the people went out to look for him, and their first visit was to the lime-tree which Pärtel was accustomed to visit so often, and towards which they had seen him going on the previous evening. Great was the amazement of the people when they found no trace of either Pärtel, the lime-tree, or the stone. The little spring near was dried up, and no trace of anything that had thus vanished was ever again beheld by human eyes.

Kreutzwald relates several other stories of young adventurers who go forth into the world to seek their fortunes with the aid of powerful protectors.

In one of these, "The Magician in the Pocket," a young man releases a magician who had been imprisoned by his enemy under a great stone, after which the magician accompanies him in his wanderings in the form of a flea, and helps him to deliver four princesses from enchantment, one of whom he marries. In another, "The God-Daughter of the Rock-Maidens," a young girl named Maasika (Strawberry) is taken down into an underground region by her godmothers, the rock-spirits, one of whom her mother had once aided when in distress. When she is grown up, she goes out into the world, kills the king of the serpents, and disenchants a king, queen, and prince, who prove to be the parents and brother of her godmothers, and she marries the prince. In a third story, "The Foundling," the hero likewise goes out in a similar manner, and meets with various adventures before marrying a princess.

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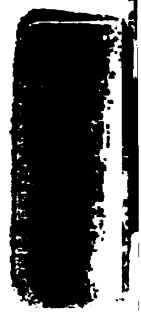

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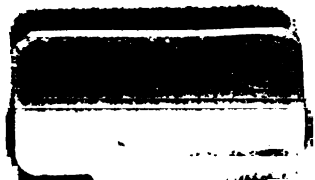
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